CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING AND ASSESSING ELL STUDENTS

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Abstract

Teachers face classrooms with diverse cultures, races, backgrounds and socioeconomic statuses. As a result, teachers need to shift from the traditional teaching approaches to the ones that can bring out better teaching and learning outcomes as well as the ones that meet different students' needs. Culturally responsive teaching is one of the effective approaches that is studied and practiced by teachers and educational researchers. Culturally responsive teaching (CRT) features the integration of students' cultural references in the classroom and making teaching relevant to students' prior knowledge and their personal identity. With this feature, CRT benefits English language learners. Culture plays a crucial role in shaping the way people think, communicate and perceive the world. CRT acknowledges, includes and celebrates individuals' cultures. In addition, culturally responsive teaching improves ELL students' social emotional conditions. What's more, CRT helps teachers build a strong relationship with culturally and linguistically diverse students, which is the foundation of academic and emotional partnership. This thesis discusses 1. The studies and benefits of CRT in ELL classrooms as well as culturally responsive teachers' characteristics; 2. How to integrate CRT practice in teaching and assessing ELL students; 3. The challenges for teachers who are implementing CRT in ELL classrooms.

Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my family who has encouraged and supported me throughout my graduate studies. My dear husband, Matt has been nothing but supportive and inspiring during times when I doubt myself. Finally, I dedicate this thesis to my father, Yanchun Zhao, who has always had confidence in me in my academic pursuits.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Dr. Michelle Plaisance for giving international teachers the opportunity to grow professionally and enrich their exchange experience with the TESOL Master Degree program. I would also like to thank all the professors in this program for their dedication and support.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

English language learners come from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Traditional teaching methods in a classroom setting usually come with a rigid way to learn the English language, which only focuses on the language itself. However, languages and cultures should not be separated. Hammond (2014) stated that with the ability to recognize students' cultural displays, educators can help culturally and linguistically diverse students close the achievement gap. English language learners' cultural heritage and prior knowledge are not often considered when teachers plan and deliver instructions. This fact makes English language learners less likely to be academically successful. According to Klein (2016), the graduation rate of ELLs in the U.S. is just over 60 percent, while the graduation rate for native speaking students is over 80 percent. Stakeholders and teachers should reflect on the teaching practice with English learners and create effective approaches to better assist ELL students' personal needs.

Over the years, the proposed reforms and discussions on the best ways of teaching English learners have never stopped. Yet many ELL teachers and learners still struggle in class. One of the most important reasons for that is teachers often lack professional development on effective instructions and are lacking support. In this thesis, I develop a workshop focusing on culturally responsive strategies for teaching and assessing English language learners. I explain what culturally responsive teaching and learning is as well as the benefits and the philosophy behind it to help raise teachers' awareness of this pedagogy. At the same time, the workshop

provides instructions on how to create culturally responsive lessons and assessment as well as my personal reflection and inquiries.

English language learners face various challenges in and outside school, both socially and academically. As a result, English language learners are self-conscious, experience low performance, and demonstrate lack of participation in class. Some attribute this to a “culture of poverty” or a different community value towards education. Yet in fact, it is the school policies and teacher practices that result in the EL students’ low performance academically. This workshop will help teachers abandon assumptions towards English learners and help them better understand their students. With this fundamental knowledge, teacher can move on to explore what culturally responsive teaching is and how to become culturally responsive educators.

Culturally responsive teaching, earlier known as “culturally relevant teaching” was made popular by Dr. Gloria Ladson-Billings in the early 1990s (Gay, 2010). The term Ladson-Billings created was defined as one “that empowers students to maintain cultural integrity, while succeeding academically” (1995a). Culturally responsive teaching acknowledges students’ diverse heritages and sees each student’s culture as an asset in the classroom. It also empowers students in academic competence and personal confidence. In addition, this pedagogy meets the social emotional needs of English language learners. In the workshop, I explain the characteristic of culturally responsive teaching and how to apply this practice in daily teaching.

Gay (2018) expanded the traditional view of culture beyond race and ethnicity. Gay (2018) emphasized that culture determines how we think, believe, and behave. In other words, culture is a student's beliefs, motivations, and even social groups and norms. Thus, the teacher who practices culturally relevant teaching understands that culture manifests itself in a variety of adaptations within how students prefer to learn. I will demonstrate how to create differentiated

instruction that can tailor learning to every aspect of a student's culture in my workshop. However, culturally responsive teaching is not a specific set of strategies or a pre-determined curriculum. It is more like a mindset that respects and honors students' individuality as well as their cultures, experiences, and histories. It is also a commitment continuing to learn about students' individuality as well as their cultures, experiences, and histories (Nieto, 2016).

In addition to explaining culturally responsive teaching strategies, I also explore culturally responsive assessment in the workshop. A meaningful assessment should be engaging and reflective besides measuring students' learning. It should be also culturally relevant. Such an assessment for English language learners should take the students' cultural literacy practice, prior knowledge and first language into consideration. Teachers should be able to find the connection between students and the assessment, whether by evoking their prior knowledge or integrating their first language (L1) literacy skills in the assessment and beyond. Teachers should also keep the following in mind while creating such an assessment. 1. Every student has the equity to access the assessment. 2. The instrument used to measure students' academic development is normed on the same population on which it is being used. 3. The assessment is designed to meet individual's cultural background and needs.

On the journey of teaching English language learners, I am not alone. Many teachers and educators are devoted in ELL education. They are creative, innovative and critically experiment various teaching philosophies. Collaboration brings wisdom and ideas together. This is why I want to develop this workshop: "Culturally Responsive Strategies for Teaching and Assessing ELL Students". I hope I can evoke some discussion and reflection after sharing my research.

The workshop I have created is intended to aid ELL teachers. It is designed to be informative and interactive. Participants will have opportunities to collaborate through

brainstorm activities, group discussions and hands-on activities. The workshop contains 3 sessions. The content consists of building culturally responsive mindset, creating culturally responsive lessons and assessment, and self-reflections.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

In this chapter, I first review some theories and studies that explain and explore the benefits of culturally responsive teaching (CRT). Then I discuss the characteristics of CRT and teacher characteristics for culturally responsive teaching. In the same manner, I discuss the significance of implementing CRT in teaching and assessing English language learners. Finally, I explore the challenges for teachers in practicing CRT and identify the gaps in CRT. Meanwhile, I invite readers to inquire what role teachers play in CRT practice.

An Overview of Culturally Responsive Teaching

Teachers face classrooms with diverse cultures, races, backgrounds and socioeconomic statuses. As a result, teachers need to shift from the traditional teaching approaches to the ones that can bring out better teaching and learning outcomes as well as the ones that meet different students' needs. Purcell-Gates (1995) provided the insights into the literacy development of children and the role of culture in this process. Purcell-Gates (1995) suggested approaching different teaching methods while working with culturally diverse students. Culturally responsive teaching is one of the effective approaches that is studied and practiced by teachers and educational researchers. Culturally responsive teaching (CRT) features the integration of students' cultural references in the classroom and making teaching relevant to students' prior knowledge and their personal identity. With this feature, CRT benefits English language learners. Most of ELLs face the challenge of low academic performance because of their

inability to access mainstream culture. CRT requires teachers to connect and relate to ELLs in their teaching practice (Ladson-Billings, 1992; Purcell-Gates, 1995).

Culturally responsive teaching is a theory of instruction that was developed by Ladson-Billings (1992) and has been written about by many other scholars since then. Ladson-Billings (1995a) stated that culturally responsive teaching empowers students to maintain cultural integrity, while succeeding academically. She further proposed three dimensions of CRT: holding high academic expectations and offering appropriate support such as scaffolding, acting on cultural competence by reshaping curriculum, and building on students' knowledge, and establishing relationships with students and their homes (Ladson-Billings, 1995a). Later Ladson-Billings (2014) further defined CRT as "empowering students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural references to impart knowledge, skills, and attitude" (p. 75). Hammond (2014) agreed that culturally responsive teaching is about empowerment and interrupting teaching practices that keep certain students dependent learners. Gay (2002) defined CRT as using the heritages, experiences, and perspectives of different ethnic and racial groups to teach students who are members of them more effectively. Gay (2018) expanded the traditional view of culture beyond race and ethnicity by emphasizing that culture determines how we think, believe, and behave.

Culturally responsive teaching (CRT) is a pedagogy that recognizes the importance of including the students' cultural references in all aspects of learning (Ladson-Billings, 2009). Culture plays a crucial role in shaping the way people think, communicate and perceive the world. CRT acknowledges, includes and celebrates individuals' cultures. Hammond (2014) defined culturally responsive teaching as

> "an educator's ability to recognize students' cultural displays of learning and meaning making and respond positively and constructively with teaching moves that use cultural knowledge as a scaffold to connect what the student knows to new concepts and content in order to promote effective information processing." (p. 15).

CRT obviously focuses very much on the part that cultures play. This is one of the reasons why this teaching approach benefits English language learners and helps them close the achievement gap as they all come from different cultures.

Moreover, culturally responsive teaching provides equitable access to education for students from all cultures. In a review of studies related to CRT, Morrell (2008) contended that CRT has positively influenced secondary ELLs' engagement and academic achievement (Morrell, 2008, as cited in Ramirez & Jimenez-Silva, 2014). Effective culturally responsive teaching is also about building an alliance with students and using that connection to stretch and empower students as learners rather than just simply getting along with them (Ladson-Billings, 2009; Hammond, 2014). Tatum (2009, as cited in Hammond, 2014) indicated that CRT strengthens student connectedness with school and enhances learning. Kalyanpur and Harry (2012) adhered to this point.

The Characteristics of Culturally Responsive Teaching

Ladson-Billings (1995b) defined three criteria of CRT, which are academic success, cultural competence and critical consciousness. Likewise, Nieto (2016) adhered to these criteria with the set of dispositions she described. These dispositions included insisting on high quality work from all students, affirming students' identities as well as valuing language and culture, and engaging in critical self-reflection. Nieto (2016) also pointed out that being culturally responsive

is not only setting the mindset that respects and honors students' cultures and histories, but also calls for including these in the curriculum and teaching approaches. The core of CRT is to acknowledge students' cultural heritage and to build bridges of meaningfulness between home and school experiences to make academic learning and school success accessible to all students (Gay, 2018; Ladson-Billings, 1994, as cited in Ramirez & Jimenez-Silva, 2014).

Some characteristics of CRT make it effective and practical when applied in ELL classrooms. CRT is characterized by a heightened awareness that ELL students might have difficulties adjusting to American schools. According to Ramirez and Jimenez-Silva (2014), CRT helps teachers focus on ELL students' cultural and language strengths as part of instruction. Moreover, the teacher provides literature reflective of students' backgrounds as a means of accommodating them for classroom instruction. Ramirez and Jimenez-Silva (2014) also stated that CRT has significant influence on the way teachers integrate ELL students of different levels in cooperative and collaborative groups. Research suggests that ELL students benefit from visual aids and hand-on activities in the classroom (Herrera & Murry, 2016). CRT provides strategies for teachers in developing such language activities. The learning environment is important for ELL students.

In addition to a safe and comfortable environment where students feel free to ask for help and ask questions, a validating classroom setting where all students are valued, their strengths are acknowledged is also important (Gay, 2018; Sleeter & Cornbleth, 2011). Teachers who practice CRT could better meet the needs of ELLs in the classroom because a validating classroom environment encourages the presence and use of multicultural literature and resources, meaningful teacher-student interaction, and integration of cooperative leaning (Gay, 2018, as cited in Ramirez & Jimenez-Silva, 2014; Hammond, 2014). Gay (2015) argued that

> "Students in schools around the world should be taught about the multiple cultural and ethnic heritages of nation states and the world, as well as the cultures and contributions of their own ethnic groups. Therefore, culturally responsive teaching is an ideological and ethical as well as methodological enterprise." (p. 125).

Gay (2015) also asserted that

> "CRT uses a wide variety of teaching techniques informed by knowledge of different cultural groups to accommodate varied learning styles; teaching historical, social, cultural, and political content about ethnic groups within different community and school locations, as well as across the nation as a whole, and in other countries; using varied cultural data-sets or texts, orientations, and behavioral style to improve the relevance of school knowledge for socially, ethnically, racially, and linguistically diverse students; and building knowledge and skill bridges to help student cross cultural borders and negotiate functioning in different cultural systems." (p. 129).

Poetry and storytelling are great ways to incorporate students' cultural and ethnical background into the classroom environment. They also help culturally and linguistically students connect and build self-confidence (Hammond, 2014; Ramirez & Jimenez-Silva, 2014). With the connection among each other, authentic engagement happens (Hammond, 2014).

Culturally responsive teaching improves ELL students' social emotional conditions so teachers should make sure their classroom is representative of all the students (Lalik, 2020). Both Haynes (2007) and Gay (2018) argued that students will understand the backgrounds of their peers and take pride in their own heritage and background when teachers have the awareness of CRT and integrate it into the classroom. Holding cultural activities with accurate representations

of students' culture and celebrating ELL students' traditional festivals promote social emotional conditions for ELLs (Haynes, 2007; Simpkins et al., 2017).

Teacher Characteristics for Culturally Responsive Teaching

Teachers as the leaders and facilitators in the classroom play a crucial role in CRT practice. Rychly and Graves (2012) pointed out four teacher practices for effectively designed and implemented CRT:

> "First, teachers are empathetic and caring. Second, teachers are reflective about their beliefs about people from other cultures. Third, teachers are reflective about their own cultural frames of reference. Last, teachers are knowledgeable about other cultures." (p. 45).

Gay (2002) adhered to the point of teachers being caring by saying that teachers who care so much about their culturally diverse students would hold the same expectations for them as for other students. Gay (2002) analyzed the effective teaching practice based on CRT: using the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits. The academic achievement of culturally and linguistically diverse students will improve when teachers incorporate students' cultures and personal experiences (Gay, 2018; Ladson-Billings, 1995a, 2009).

Later, Gay (2018) added that caring within a culturally responsive context automatically places teachers in a different kind of emotional and academic partnership with students. Likewise, Hammond (2014) pointed out that teachers and students will build trust and connection when teachers authentically care about who their students are, what they have to say, and how they feel. Empathy refers to the teacher's ability to understand the classroom from her

students' perspectives (Rychly & Graves, 2012). Hammond (2014) stated that culturally responsive teachers are able to reflect on challenges and are willing to listen and change in order to respond positively and constructively to students of other cultures.

Ladson-Billings (1995b) stressed that culturally responsive teachers should encourage culturally and linguistically diverse students to maintain some cultural integrity while they pursue academic excellence. According to Ladson-Billings (1995b), culturally responsive teachers utilize students' cultures in academic learning. She gave an example showing how a teacher might merge academic achievement and cultural competence by allowing the students to use music lyrics in poetry. Ladson-Billings (1995b) also pointed out the importance of involving parents in the classrooms and encouraging students to use their home language. In the later work, Ladson-Billings (2014) argued that culturally responsive teachers are able to link principles of learning with deep understanding of culture. Ladson-Billings (2014) believed that students take responsibility for their leaning and show deep interest in their education when teachers focus on student learning and academic achievement, cultural competence, and sociopolitical consciousness.

Practice CRT in Teaching and Assessing ELLs

In order to apply CRT in daily teaching and assessing, teachers need to prepare themselves with the knowledge base and pedagogical skills required. Part of the knowledge includes understanding students' cultural characteristics and acknowledge the contributions of different cultures (Gay, 2002; Hammond, 2014). Gay (2002) detailed that teachers' knowledge base for culturally responsive teaching should go beyond the surface. Instead, teachers should acquire detailed factual information about the cultural particularities of specific ethnic groups

(e.g., African, Asian, Latino, and Native American). Hammond (2014) had the same argument related to teachers' understanding of their students' cultures. Hammond (2014) pointed out the different levels of culture: surface culture, shallow culture, and deep culture. Teachers need to understand students' deep cultures in order to effectively practice CRT. Learning about the students' cultures helps teachers form relationships with them more easily. Values, traditions, social and political relationships, shared history, geographic location, language, social class, and religion determine many aspects of personality and lay out pathways for dealing with the world (Nieto & Bode, 2011, as cited in Short et al., 2018).

Ladson-Billings (1995a) analyzed some effective practices by culturally responsive teachers. The practice includes teachers' attempt to support and instill community pride in the students during teaching, encouraging students to ask questions and helping them find solutions, guiding students to code-switch and role-switching and helping students understand the standards by which they were to be evaluated (Ladson-Billings, 1995a). Ladson-Billings (1995a) stressed that exemplary CRT practice requires teachers to systematically include student culture in the classroom as authorized or official knowledge.

Both Hammond (2014) and DelliCarpini (2009) identified the academic achievement gap displayed in standardized tests between ELLs and mainstream students. Proponents of CRT practice believe in and expect high-quality work from ELLs regardless of their cultural or linguistic background (Lalik, 2020). Lalik (2020) believed that scaffolding and test preparation in the classroom effectively help ELLs achieve a higher level of performance in assessments.

CRT encourages teachers to create authentic assessment. Authentic assessment brings out positive performances of ELLs because this kind of assessment ensures that students' background knowledge, personal experience, prior knowledge and individual strengths are taken

into account (DelliCarpini, 2009; Gay, 2018; Lalik, 2020). Authentic assessment encourages learners to apply a meaningful performance task in order to demonstrate knowledge, skill, strengths and needs in a realistic and authentic manner (Chapman et al., 2005). Gay (2018) asserted that teachers must "use varied modes of communication in teaching and performance assessment to capitalize on different students' strengths, including written, verbal, visual, tactile, and kinetic modalities" (p. 141). Visualization together with verbal or written text can help ELLs engage in learning (Gay, 2018; Herrera & Murry, 2016).

ELLs have different learning styles formed by different prior knowledge and learning experience. Assessment created under CRT should meet individual's need and leaning styles because one tool does not fit all. With these considerations, students are more likely to process, understand, and produce content knowledge (Chapman et al., 2005; Haynes, 2007). Under CRT theory, ideally, authentic assessment should be differentiated. The benefits of differentiated assessment strategies include getting adequate assessment data to use in teacher planning, promoting students' higher order thinking skills, monitoring students' strengths and needs to help them grow cognitively and affectively (Chapman et al., 2005).

The Challenges for Teachers in Practicing CRT

Multicultural competency is one of the challenges for teachers when they try to apply CRT in teaching practice. Not all teachers have the necessary attitudes, values, knowledge, and skills for teaching cultural diversity. However, Gay (2015) believed that with sufficient training, teachers can learn to be effective cross-racially, cross-culturally, cross-ethnically, cross-socially, and cross-linguistically. In addition, assessment designing can be challenging as well. Culturally responsive teachers should be able to employ meaningful assessments and rubrics that can

accurately measure quality. Likewise, teachers should be able to use assessment data to support individual student learning (Lew & Nelson, 2016). Lew and Nelson (2016) found that there is a significant gap between teacher education curriculum and the real fabric of schools in the area of CRT. To help teachers face this challenge confidently, some concerted measures should be planned to bridge the gap between theory and practice.

Chapter 3: Project Design

In this chapter, I explain the rationale for creating a workshop for ELL teachers who struggle with the application of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) in the classroom with culturally linguistically diverse (CLD) students. The workshop has three sessions and consists of building a culturally responsive mindset, creating culturally responsive strategies, as well as self-reflections. The goal is to help teachers understand and effectively practice CRT. This workshop also explains and explores what culturally responsive teaching and learning is, as well as the benefits and the philosophy behind this pedagogy. Through the informative and interactive workshop, participants will comprehend what the final product of the project is like, how it works, and how it can benefit the target audience. The actual product of this project is presented in the next chapter with a PowerPoint Presentation.

Over years, ELL teachers and students struggle with academic achievement. One of the most important reasons for this is that teachers often lack professional development on effective instructions and support. CRT is one of the effective teaching practices that benefits ELL teachers and students. Gay (2018) and Hammond (2014) emphasized the significance of recognizing and integrating culturally and linguistically diverse students' culture into teaching practice. In another word, make teaching relevant to students' culture.

The first session of the workshop focuses on explaining and understanding the characteristics of CRT. Only when teachers comprehend the essence of CRT, can they apply it effectively in their own practice. CRT features the integration of students' cultural references in the classroom and making teaching relevant to students' prior knowledge and their personal identity. With this

feature, CRT helps ELL students fill the academic achievement gap caused by the inability to access mainstream culture. CRT empowers students to maintain cultural integrity, while succeeding academically (Ladson-Billings, 1992). In addition, CRT calls for teachers to be empathetic and caring, as well as knowledgeable about other cultures (Rychly & Graves, 2012). Those characteristics help teachers build a strong relationship with culturally and linguistically diverse students as the foundation of academic and emotional partnership. Both Haynes (2007) and Gay (2018) argued that students will understand the backgrounds of their peers and take pride in their own heritage and background when teachers have awareness of CRT and integrate it into the classroom. Holding cultural activities with accurate representations of students' culture and celebrating ELL students' traditional festivals promote social emotional conditions for ELLs (Haynes, 2007; Simpkins et al., 2017).

The second session of the workshop focuses on utilizing CRT in teaching and assessing practice. Teachers with CRT in mind while preparing lessons support and instill community pride in the students as well as encourage students to ask questions and become risk takers. At the same time, teachers expect high-quality work from ELL students regardless of their cultural or linguistic backgrounds (Lalik, 2020). This session also guides teachers in how to create authentic assessment for ELL students with CRT theory. An authentic assessment is not "one tool fits all" assessment; instead, it is assessment that ensures that all students' background knowledge, personal experiences, prior knowledge and individual strengths are taken into account. Differentiation takes place in teaching and assessing in CRT practice in order to meet individual students' needs. The best teaching practices consider all learners in a classroom setting and pay close attention to differences inherent to academic, cultural, linguistic and socioeconomic diversity (Santamaria, 2009).

Lew and Nelson (2016) found that there is a significant gap between the teacher education curriculum and the real fabric of schools in the area of CRT. The third session of the workshop identifies challenges and explores solutions for teachers who want to implement CRT in teaching ELLs. , Gay (2015) believed that with sufficient training, teachers can learn to be effective cross-racially, cross-culturally, cross-ethnically, cross-socially, and cross-linguistically. During this session, teachers will work in groups to share their thoughts and experience, brainstorm ideas and reflect on their teaching practices.

Ultimately, this workshop means to evoke conversations and inspire innovations regarding culturally responsive teaching practice. With limited trainings and professional development opportunities on CRT, this workshop hopefully provides teachers with a platform where they can network and collaborate and exchange idea.

Chapter 4: The Project

The product of this project is a workshop that focuses on the culturally responsive teaching (CRT) pedagogy. The workshop explains the significance of CRT in ELL classrooms. In addition, the workshop offers strategies for teaching and assessing ELLs. This informative and interactive workshop is designed to aid ELL teachers to implement CRT in a more professional and effective way. Participants will have opportunities to collaborate through brainstorm activities and group activities. The delivery of the workshop content and activities is supported by a PowerPoint presentation (See Appendix A: Slides). The workshop includes three sessions: 1. The characteristics of CRT and the benefits of CRT in ELL classrooms. 2. The practice of CRT in teaching and assessing ELL students. 3. The challenges and possible solutions in the CRT practice. Ultimately, the workshop means to evoke conversations and inspire innovations regarding culturally responsive teaching practice. At the same time, the workshop will provide teachers with a platform to collaborate and exchange ideas.

Here is the workshop agenda: (Figure 4.1. See also Appendix A, Slide #2).

Figure 4.1 Workshop Agenda

Session 1

This session begins with the definition of culturally responsive teaching (Figure 4.2. See also Appendix A, Slide #4), followed by teachers' characteristics for CRT (Figure 4.3. See also Appendix A, Slide #5). Only when teacher comprehend the essence of CRT, can they apply it effectively in their own practice.

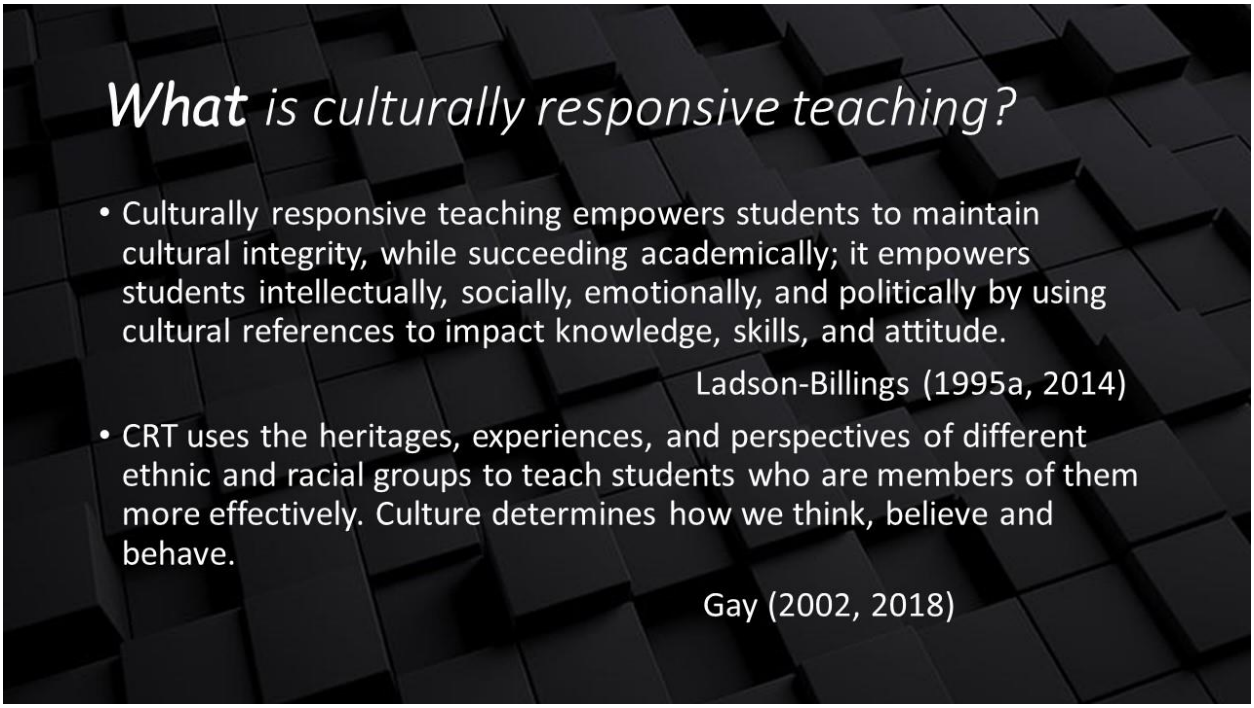

Figure 4.2: What is Culturally Responsive Teaching?

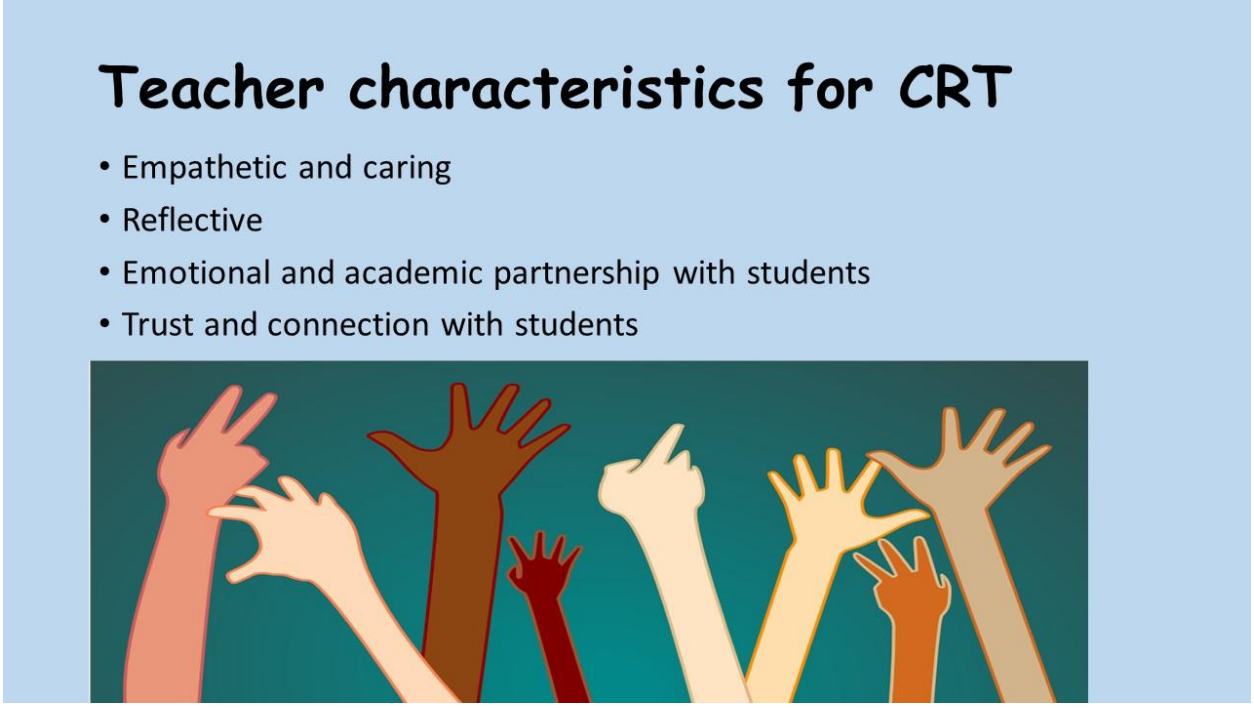

Figure 4.3: Teacher Characteristics for CRT

Next, the focus is placed on why CRT benefits ELL students and teachers (Figure 4.4, Figure 4.5, and Figure 4.6. See also Appendix A, Slide #7, Slide #8, and Slide #9). CRT features

the integration of students' cultural references in the classroom and making teaching relevant to students' prior knowledge and their personal identity. With this feature, CRT help ELL students fill the academic achievement gap caused by the inability to access mainstream culture.

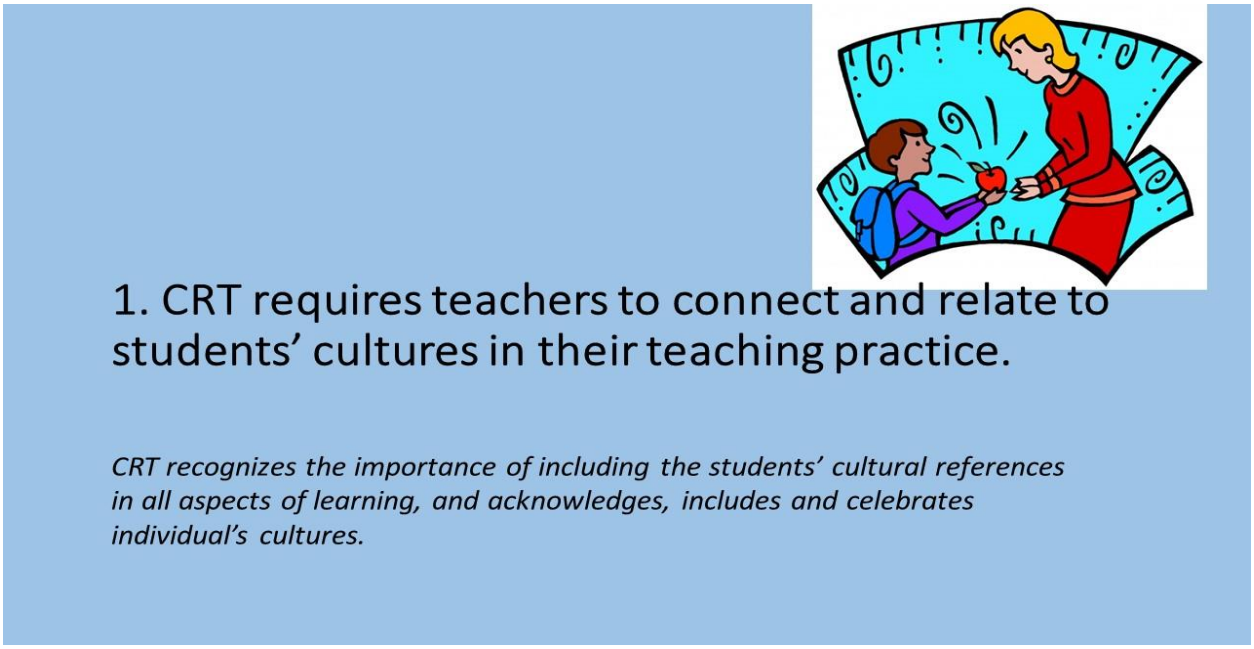

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Figure 4.5

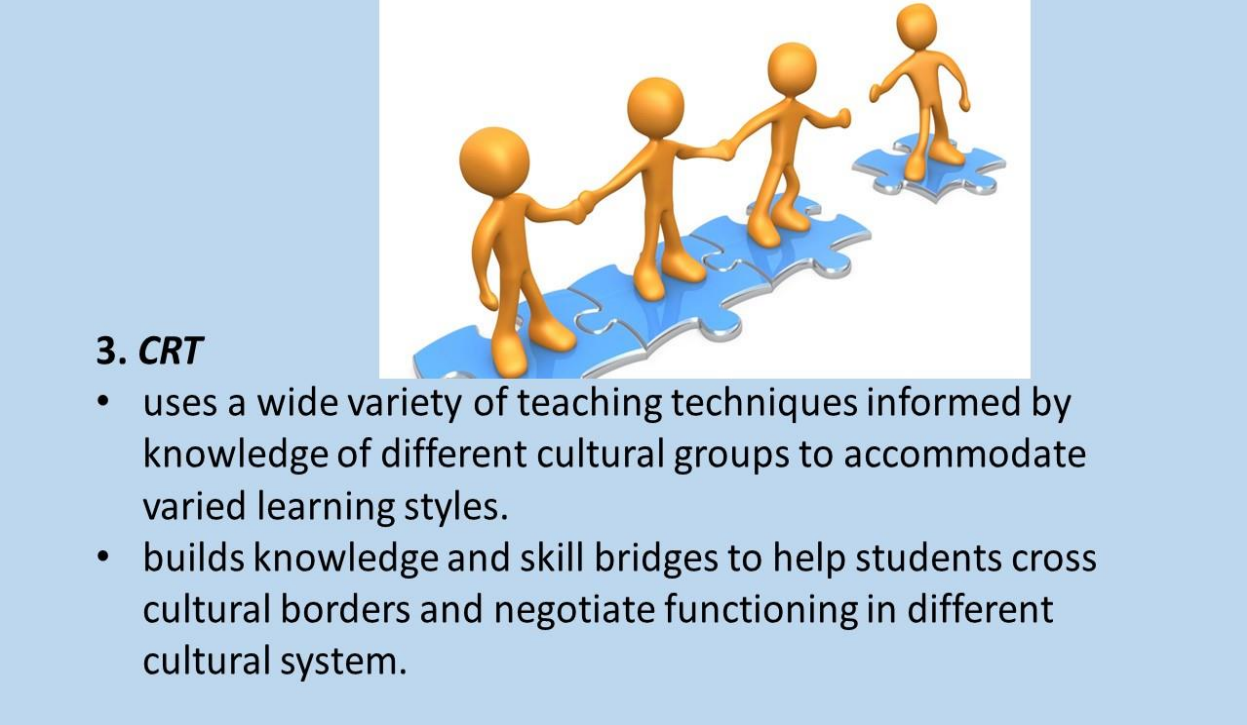


Figure 4.6

Session 2

The second session of the workshop focuses on utilizing CRT in teaching and assessing practice. It starts with a list of CRT strategies that teachers can utilize in their classrooms (Figure 4.7. See also Appendix A, Slide #11). The strategies include learning about the learners, utilizing learning stations, engaging students, using technologies in the classroom, providing effective feedbacks and involving parents.

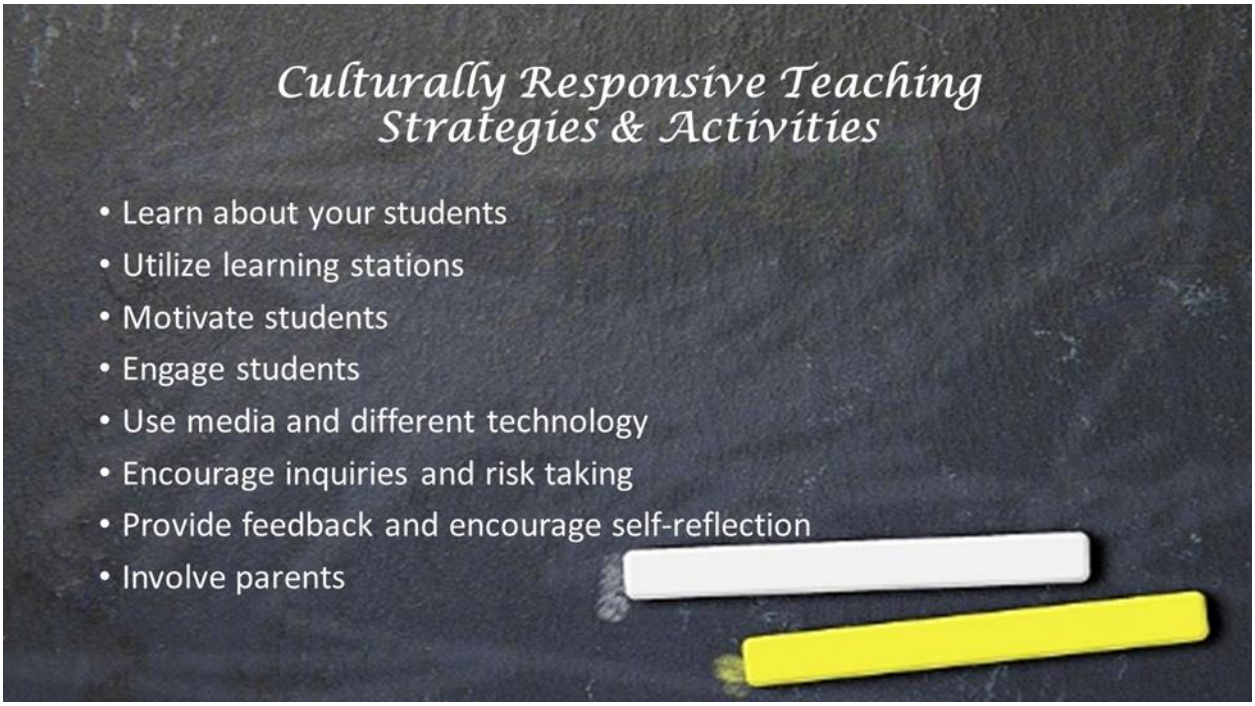
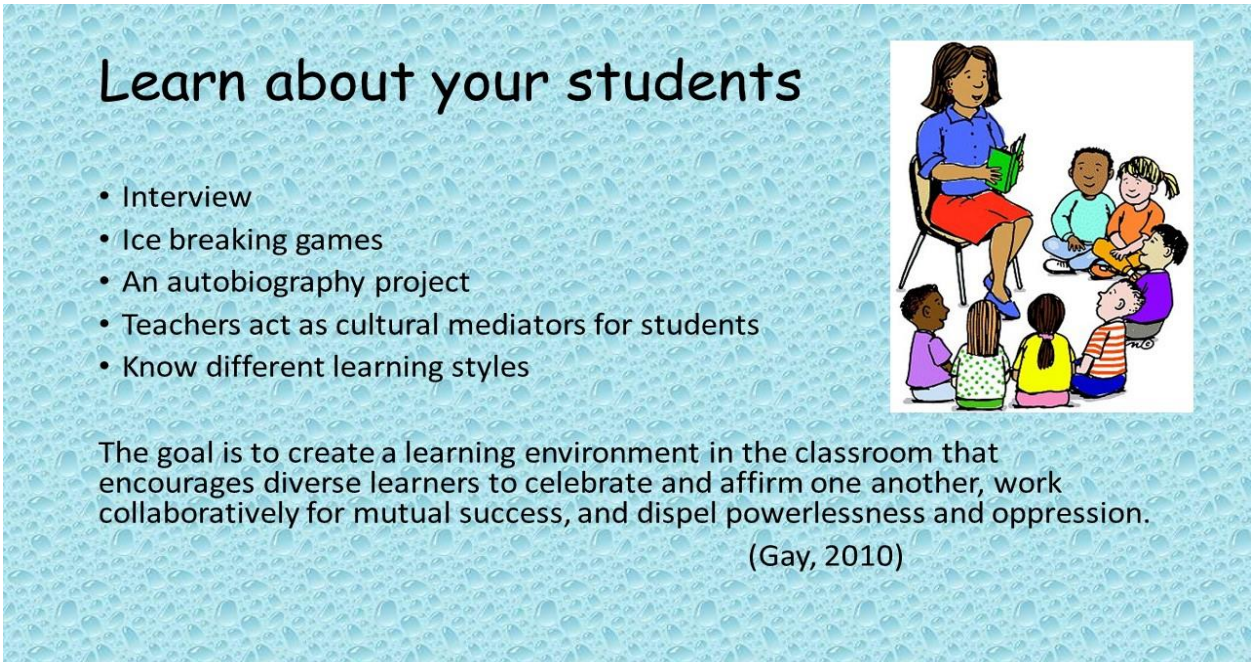


Figure 4.7

Followed the overall introduction is detailed explanation or activities of each strategy (Figure 4.8-Figure 4.15. See also Appendix A, Slide #12-Slide #19).



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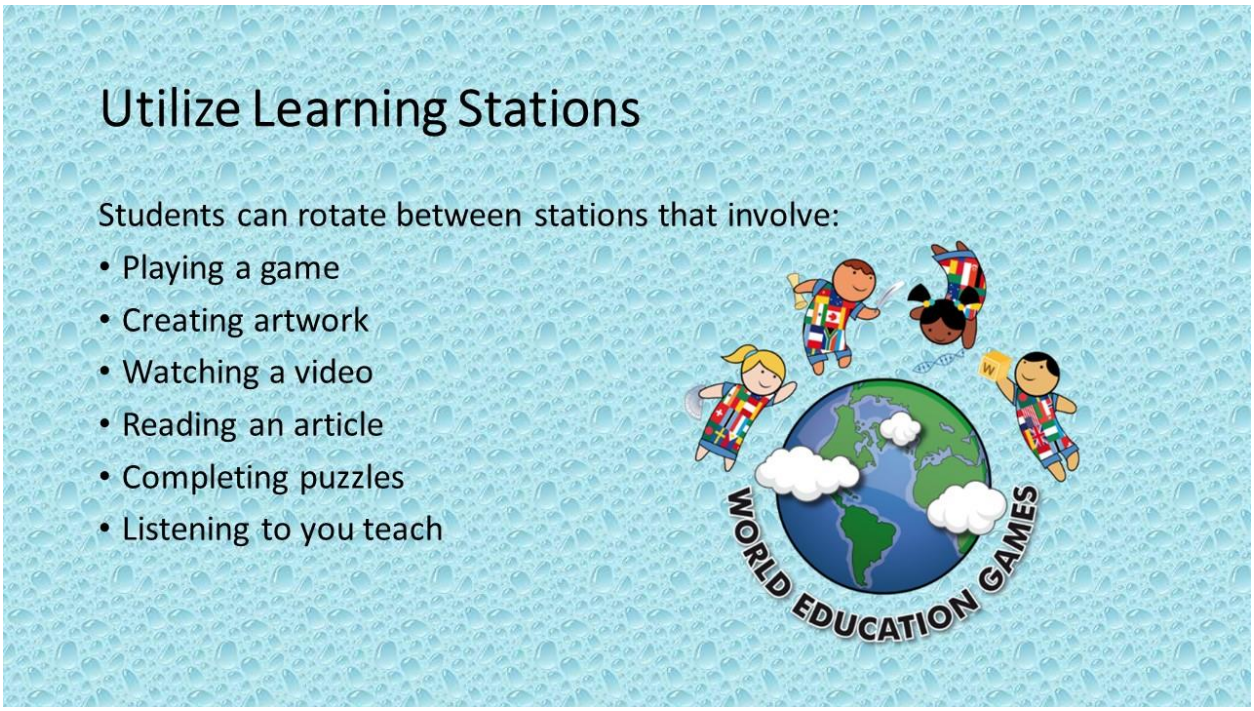

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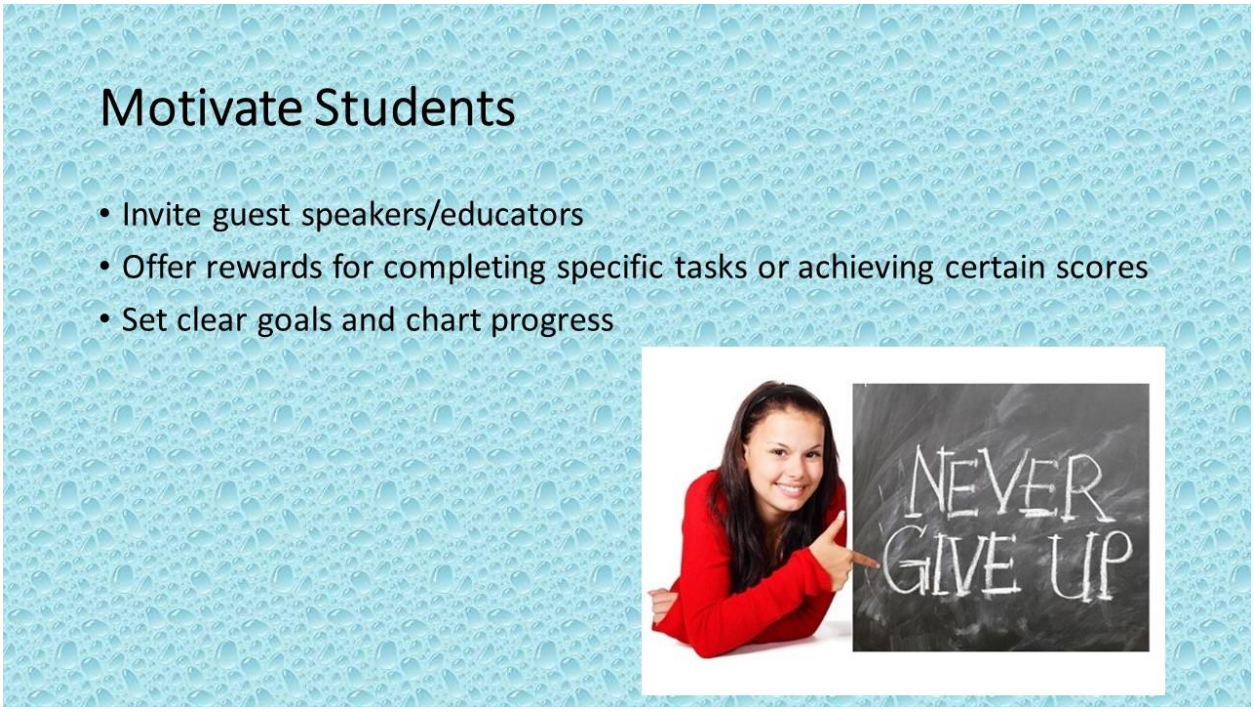

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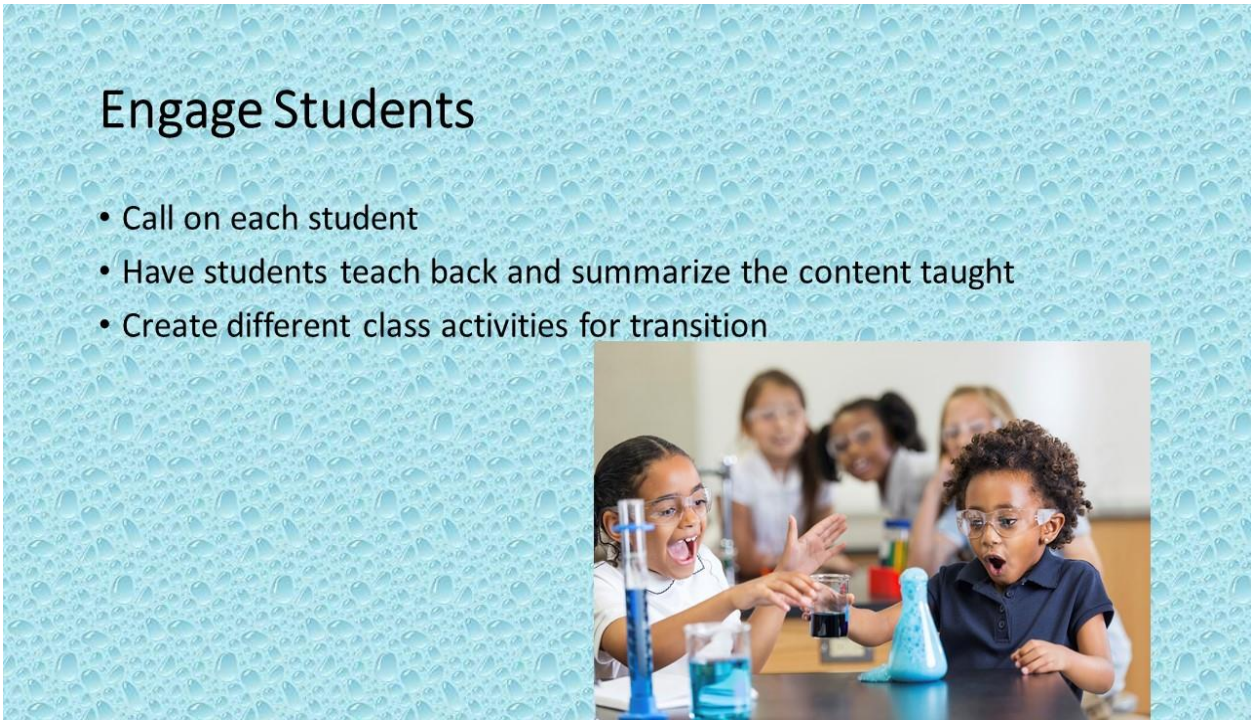

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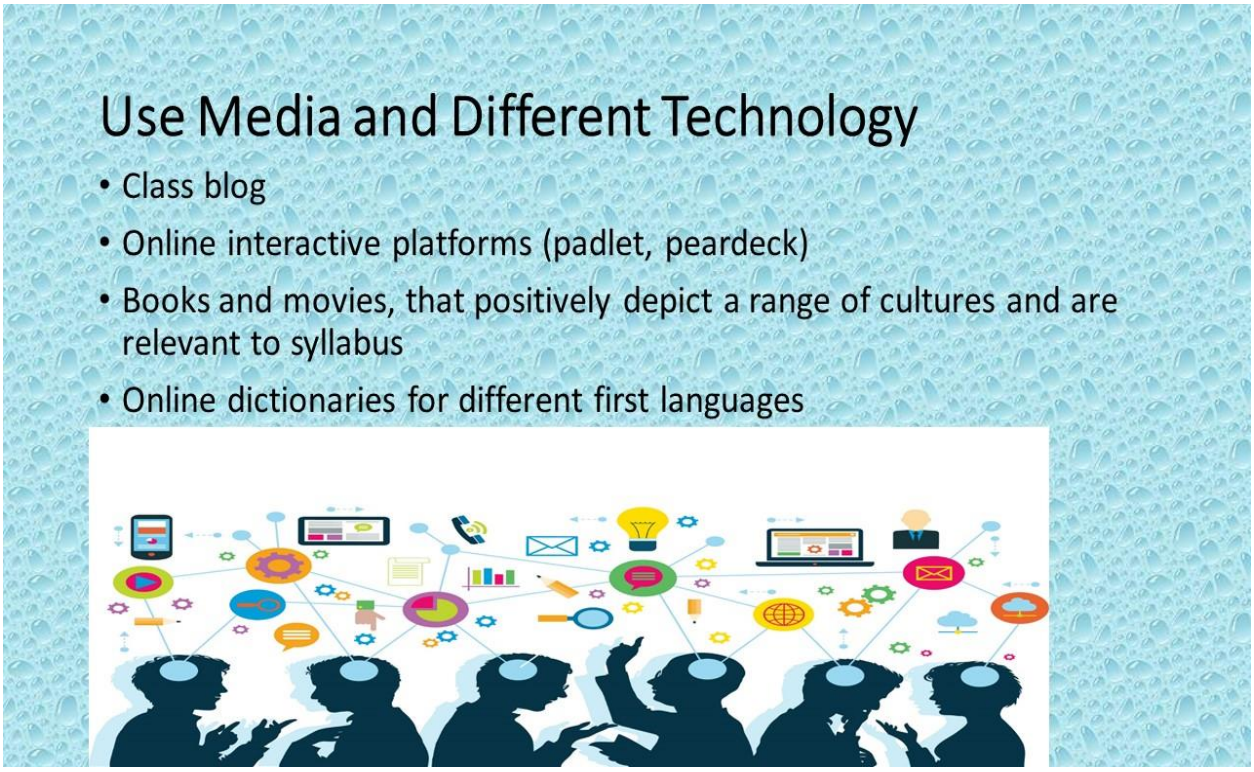

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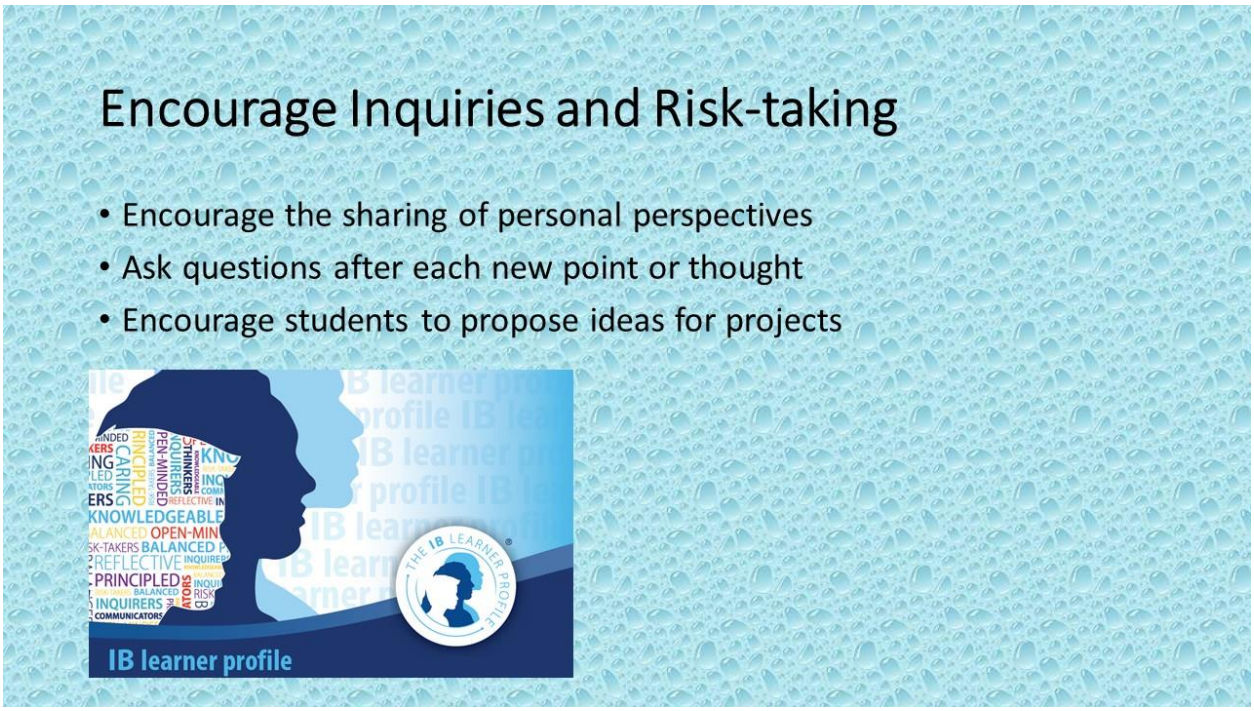


Figure 4.13

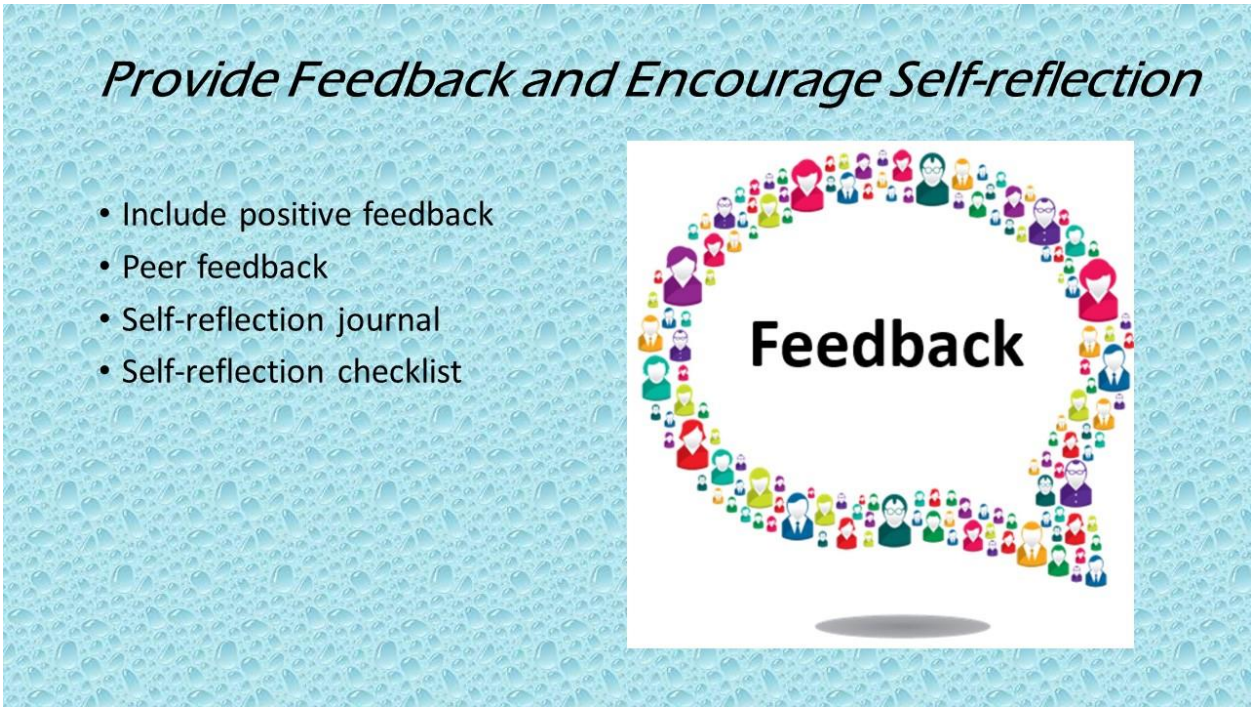


Figure 4.14

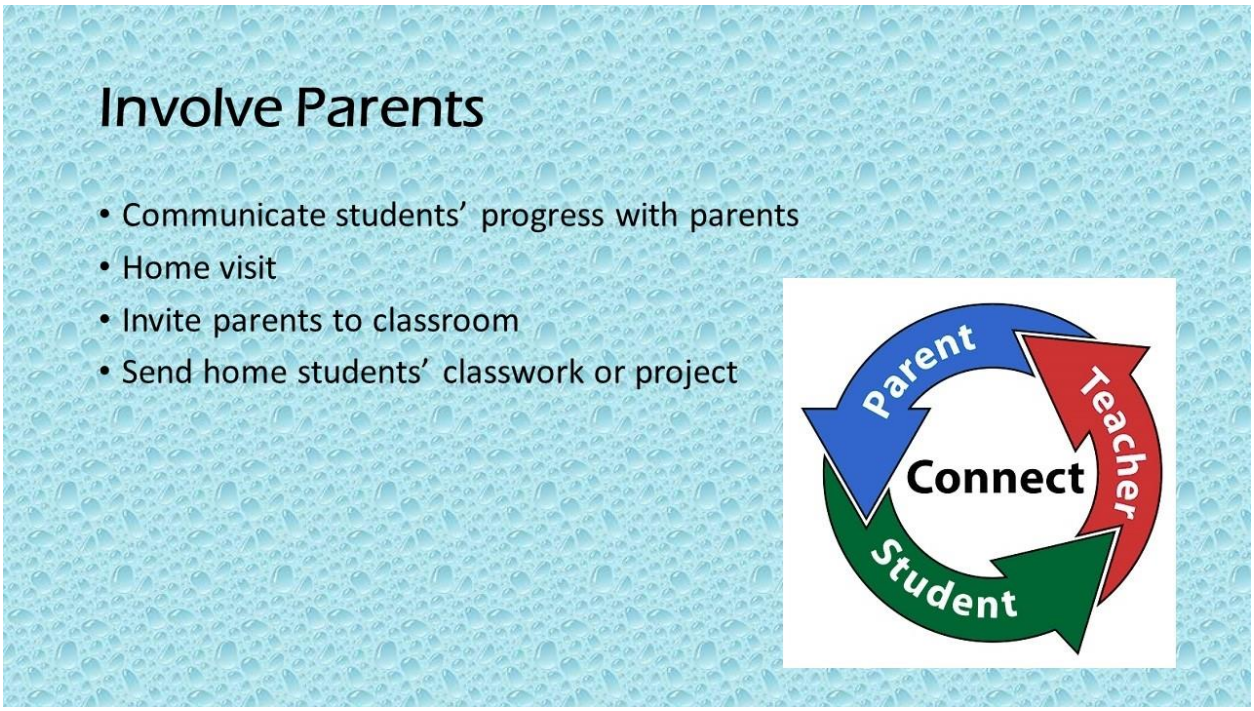


Figure 4.15

The second part of Session 2 focuses on the assessing instrument that reflects culturally responsive pedagogy. It also guides teachers to create authentic assessment for ELL students with CRT theory. An authentic assessment is not "one tool fits all" assessment, instead, it is assessment that ensures that all students' background knowledge, personal experience, prior knowledge and individual strengths are taken into account (Figure 4.16 and Figure 4.17. See also Appendix A, Slide #21 and Slide #22).

- ✓ Tailor assessment to the background and needs of individual students
- ✓ Consider Equity to the assessment
- ✓ Be selective with assessment instruments
- ✓ Provide a critical space for students to reflect on and share their personal stories and their identities as learners.
- ✓ Consider cultural identities and encourage rigor

Figure 4.16

Assessment instruments:

- ❑ Survey (get to know your learners)
- ❑ Portfolio (share stories and build relationships)
- ❑ Self-assessment (gain ownership and responsibility)
- ❑ Story telling with drawings (encourage home language using and creativity)

Figure 4.17

Session 3

This session means to identify challenges in the implementation of CRT practice. At the same time, participants have the opportunity to discuss and brainstorm solutions to the challenges that they may encounter (Figure 4.18. See also Appendix A, Slide #24). Gay (2015) believed that with sufficient training, teachers can learn to be effective cross-racially, cross-culturally, cross-ethnically, cross-socially, and cross-linguistically. During this session, teachers will work in groups to share their thoughts and experience as well as reflect on their teaching practice (Figure 4.19. See also Appendix A, Slide #25).

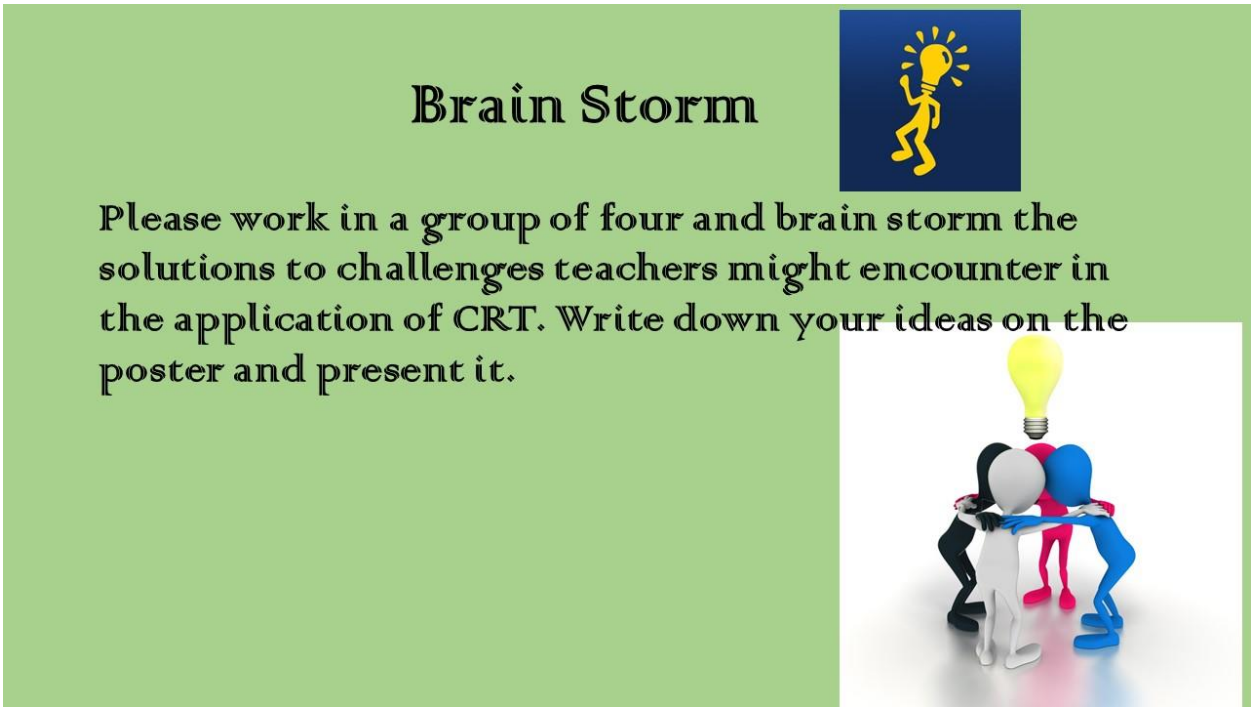


Figure 4.18

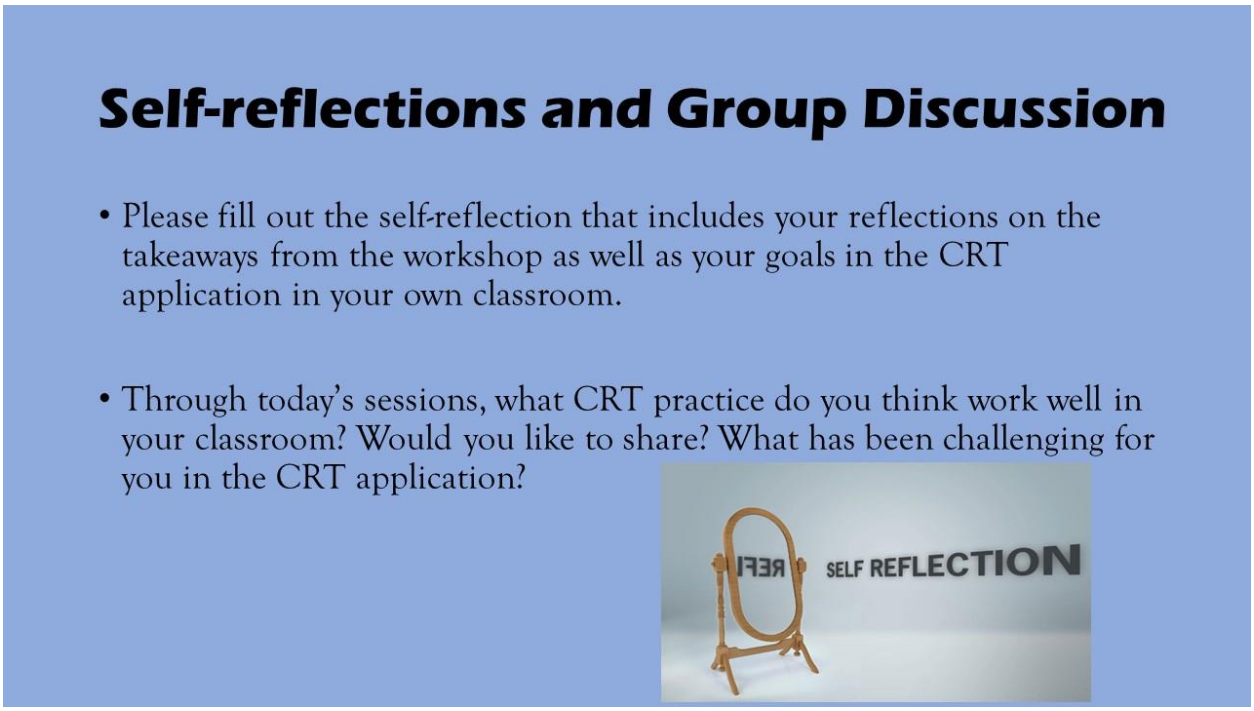


Figure 4.19

At the end of the session, teachers are provided a self-reflection form with reflective questions (Figure 4.20. See also Appendix A, Slide #26). Some resources about CRT practice are also be available for participants (Figure 4.21. See also Appendix A, Slide #27).

SELF-REFLECTION FORM

1. What is your biggest takeaway from today's session?	
2. What is your strength in implementing CRT?	
3. What is your biggest challenge in CRT implementation? How will you overcome this challenge in your future practice?	
4. What is your goal in applying CRT in your classroom after today's workshop?	
5. What CRT practice would you like to share with your peers that have worked well in your own classroom?	

Figure 4.20

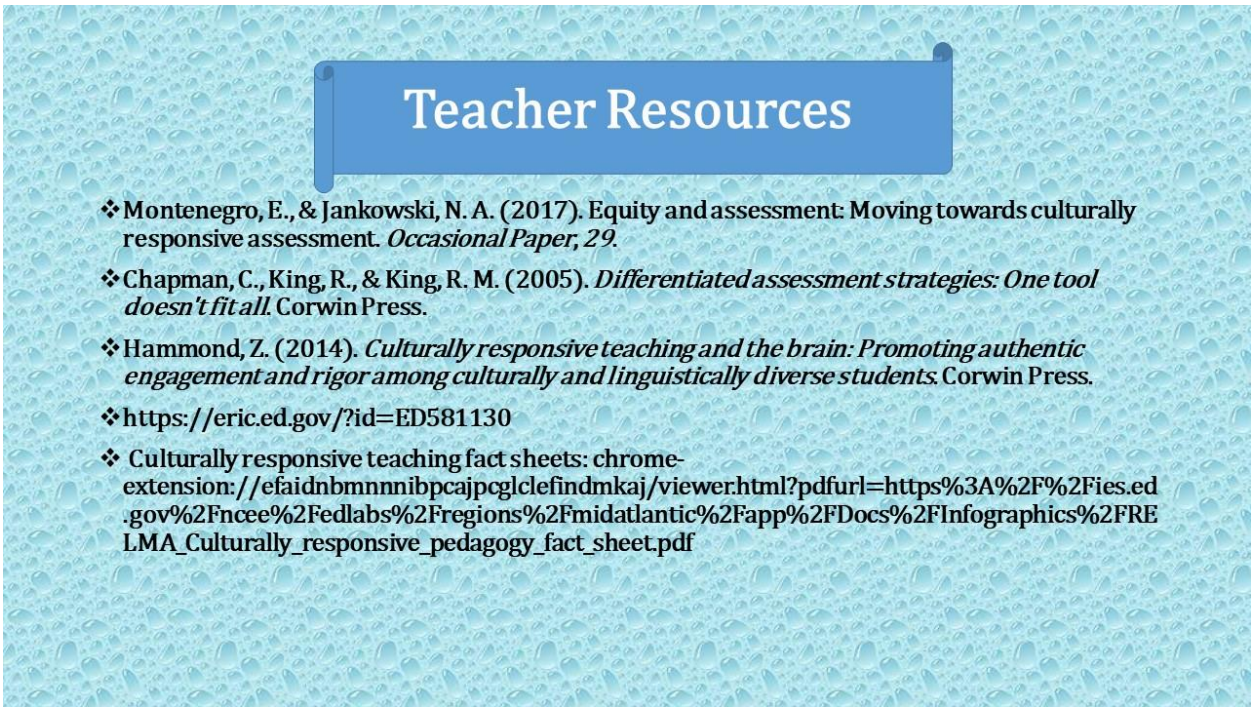

Teacher Resources
Montenegro, E., & Jankowski, N. A. (2017). Equity and assessment: Moving towards culturally responsive assessment. *Occasional Paper, 29*.
Chapman, C., King, R., & King, R. M. (2005). *Differentiated assessment strategies: One tool doesn't fit all*. Corwin Press.
Hammond, Z. (2014). *Culturally responsive teaching and the brain: Promoting authentic engagement and rigor among culturally and linguistically diverse students*. Corwin Press.
https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED581130
Culturally responsive teaching fact sheets: chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/viewer.html?pdfurl=https%3A%2F%2Fies.ed.gov%2Fncee%2Fedlabs%2Fregions%2Fmidatlantic%2Fapp%2FDocs%2FInfographics%2FRELMA_Culturally_responsive_pedagogy_fact_sheet.pdf

Figure 4.21

Chapter 5: Conclusion

The research for this project deepened my understanding of culturally responsive teaching. Ladson-Billings (1995a) stated that culturally responsive teaching empowers students to maintain cultural integrity while succeeding academically. Teachers are faced with classrooms with diverse cultures, races, backgrounds and socioeconomic statuses. As a result, we need to take cultural elements into consideration while planning, delivering lessons, and assessing students. During the research process, I also became aware of the lack of resources and training for teachers who want to practice culturally responsive teaching. Likewise, the resources are limited for ELL students.

The research work renewed my understanding of culturally responsive teaching. Through reviewing the theories and studies of CRT, I confirmed the characteristics and benefits of CRT practice for ELL students. Culture plays a crucial role in shaping the way people think, communicate, and perceive the world. CRT acknowledges, includes and celebrates individuals' cultures. As a language teacher who has worked with students from different races and backgrounds, I have concerns and difficulties in planning lessons to effectively integrate students' different cultures. I have had doubts and confusion in many traditional educational course designs and teaching practices. Therefore, I decided to create this product to help educators like me who work with culturally and linguistically diverse students. I was hoping to provide some basic concepts, solid theories, and practical strategies in my workshops. At the same time, I hoped that I could spark some conversations and ideas among educators through the workshops.

The workshop was divided into three sessions because I did not want to overwhelm the participants. However, the three sessions are scaffolded and connected. I tried to design it in a way that teachers can not only easily integrate, but also engage and reflect. The second session of the workshop focused on utilizing CRT in teaching and assessing practice. Teachers with CRT on their mind while preparing lessons support and instill community pride in the students, as well as encourage students to ask questions and become risk takers. This session offered useful strategies and sample activities that teachers could use right away in their classrooms. Behind each strategy lay the corresponding CRT theory. Teachers could relate back to the theories and studies from the first session they attended.

The process of creating this product stimulated my interests and passion towards a CRT approach. Therefore, the third session of this workshop was designed to be conducted in an interactive way through which participants have the opportunity to express their opinions, share their thoughts, exchange ideas, and make inquiries. Group activities like discussions and collaborations take place in this session. The final reflective part of this session focuses on personal reflections on CRT practice. Every participant will have an opportunity to reflect on their own teaching practice after the professional development opportunity. Being reflective is one of the great traits of educators.

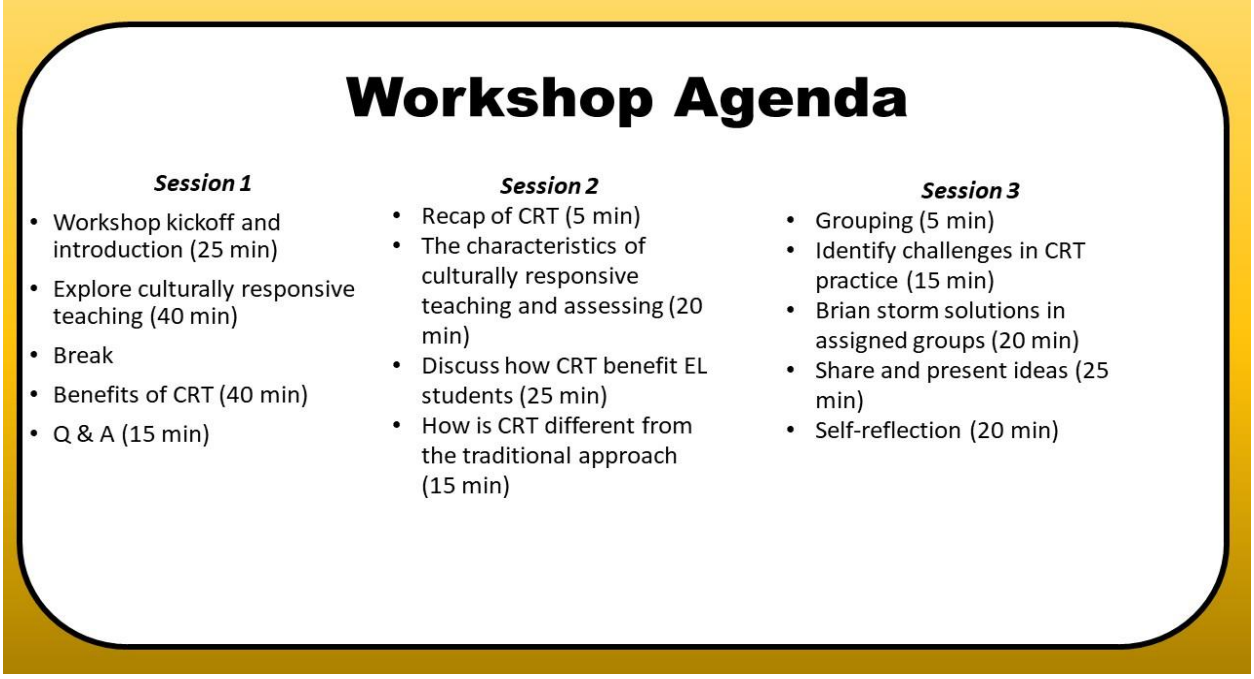
This workshop touched on limited and basic knowledge of culturally responsive teaching and assessment practices. To maximize the learning outcome of this workshop, participants need to continuously reflect on their lesson planning and assessment tools, as well as inquire and adjust their CRT practice. Future research is needed in order to aid teachers to create CRT lesson plans. This workshop did not dive into lesson planning practice due to the limitation of time and

research. In the future, I will integrate lesson planning and assessment samples into this workshop.

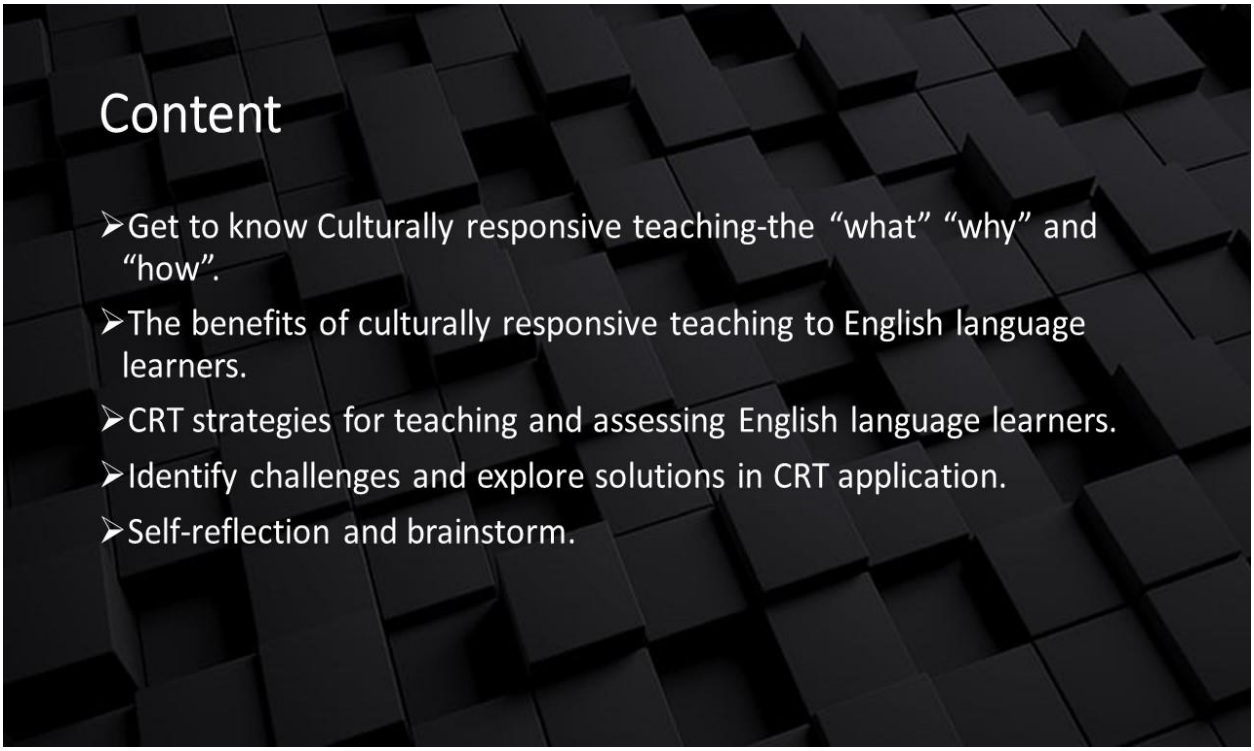
Appendix

Appendix A: PowerPoint Presentation

Slide #1



Slide #2



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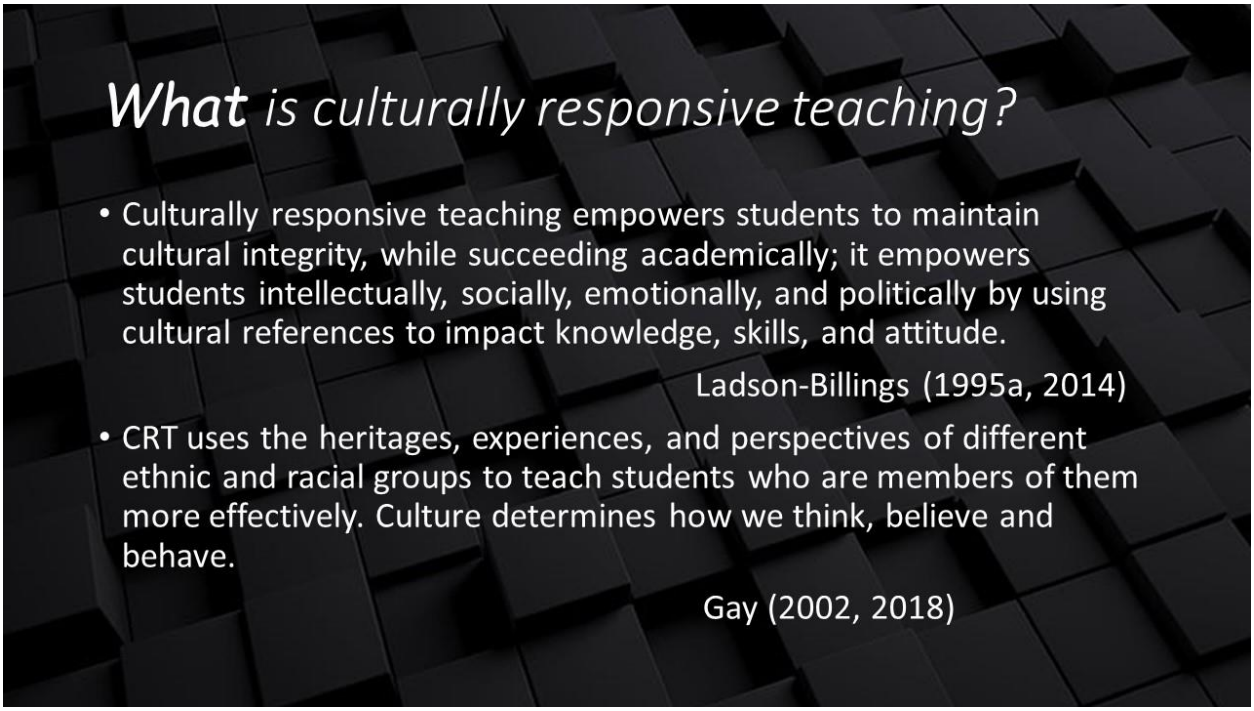

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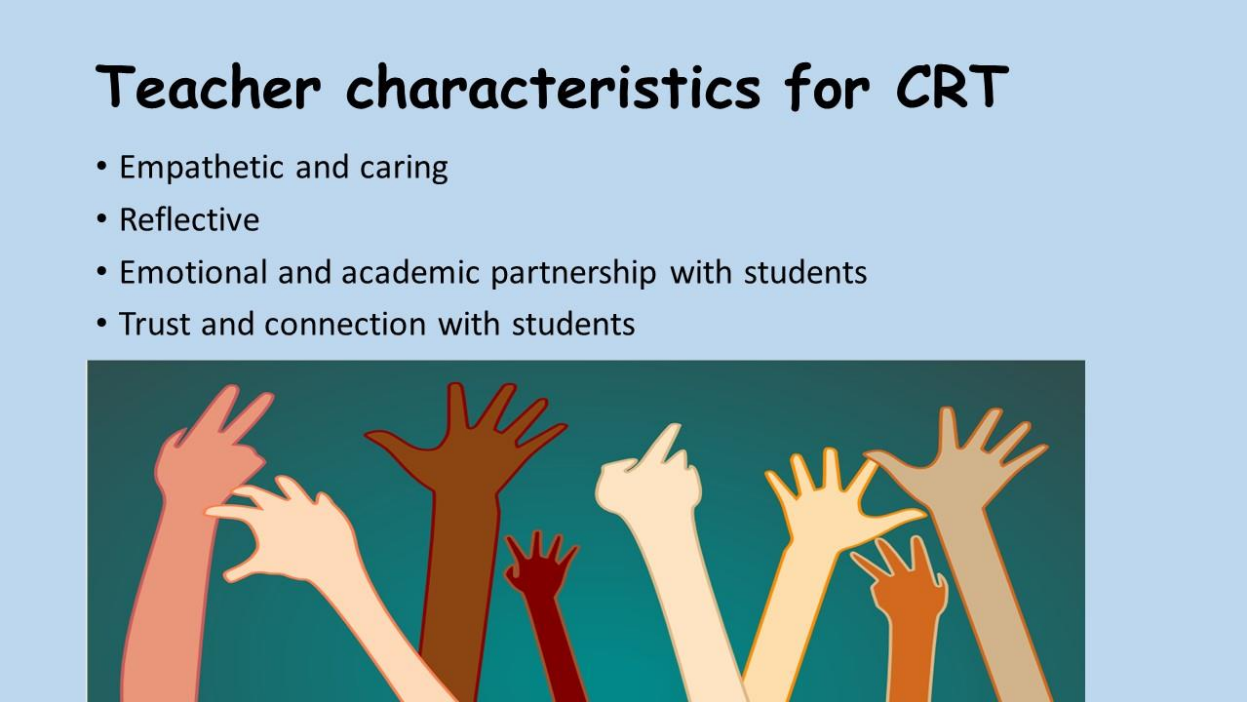
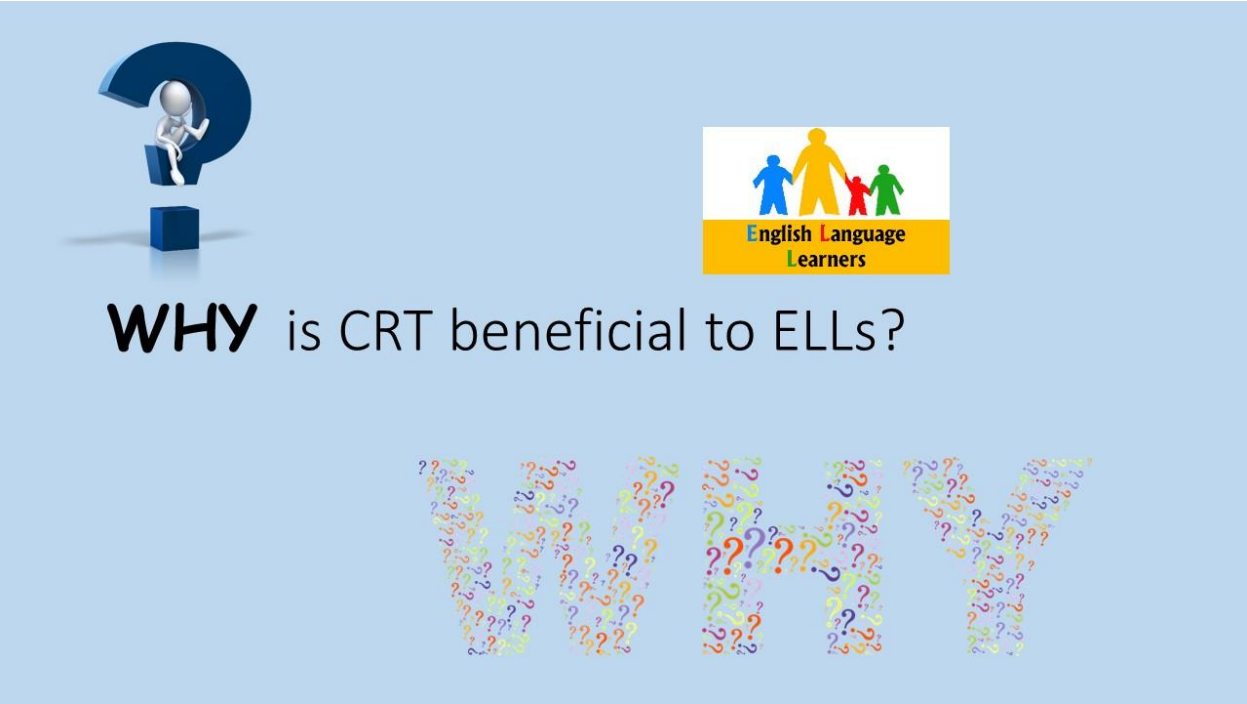


Slide #5



Slide #6

1. CRT requires teachers to connect and relate to students' cultures in their teaching practice.

CRT recognizes the importance of including the students' cultural references in all aspects of learning, and acknowledges, includes and celebrates individual's cultures.

Slide #7

2. *CRT* provides equitable access to education for students from all cultures and help students close the achievement gap.

Slide #8

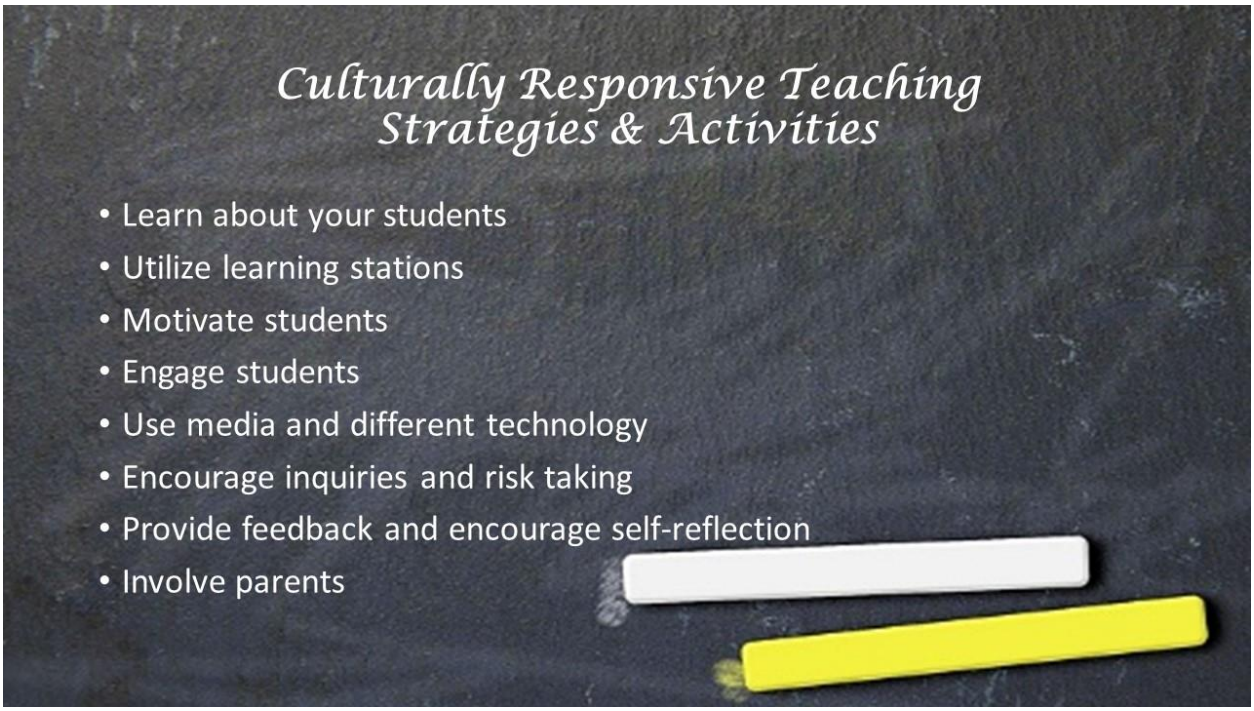
3. *CRT*

- uses a wide variety of teaching techniques informed by knowledge of different cultural groups to accommodate varied learning styles.
- builds knowledge and skill bridges to help students cross cultural borders and negotiate functioning in different cultural system.

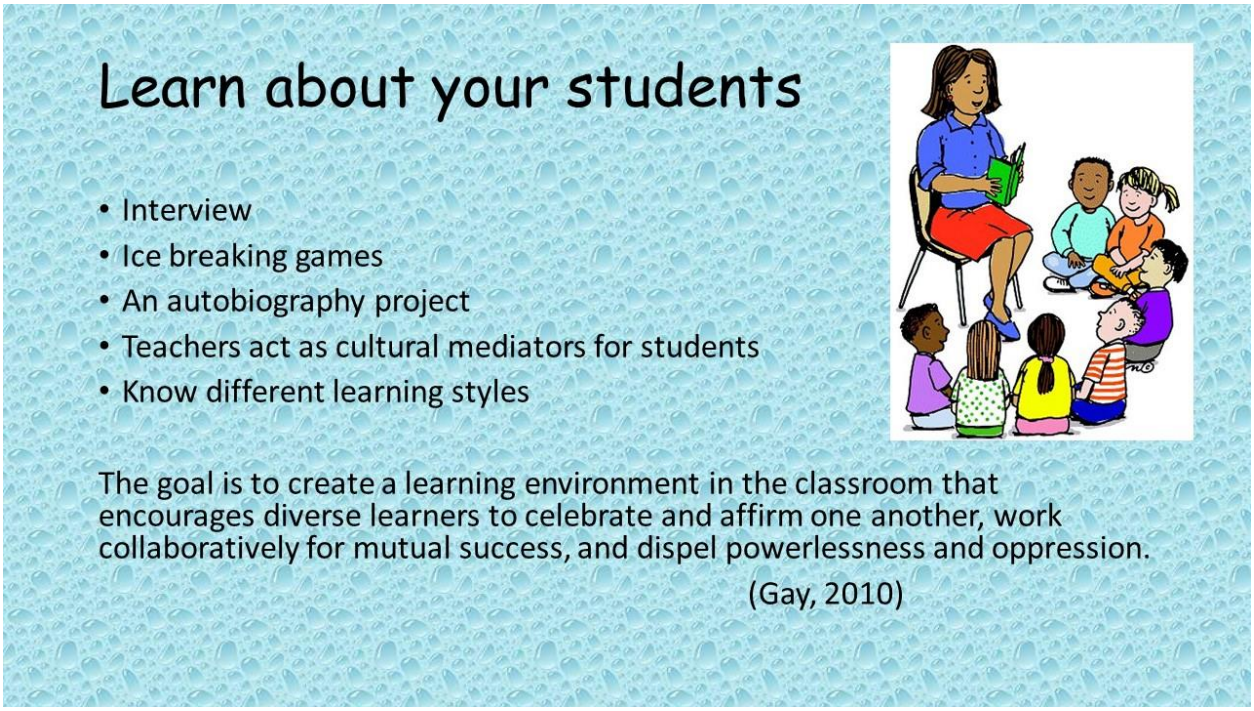
Slide #9

CRT in Teaching

Slide #10



Slide #11

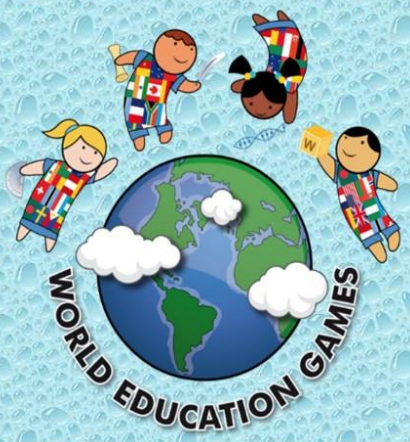


Slide #12

Utilize Learning Stations

Students can rotate between stations that involve:

- Playing a game
- Creating artwork
- Watching a video
- Reading an article
- Completing puzzles
- Listening to you teach



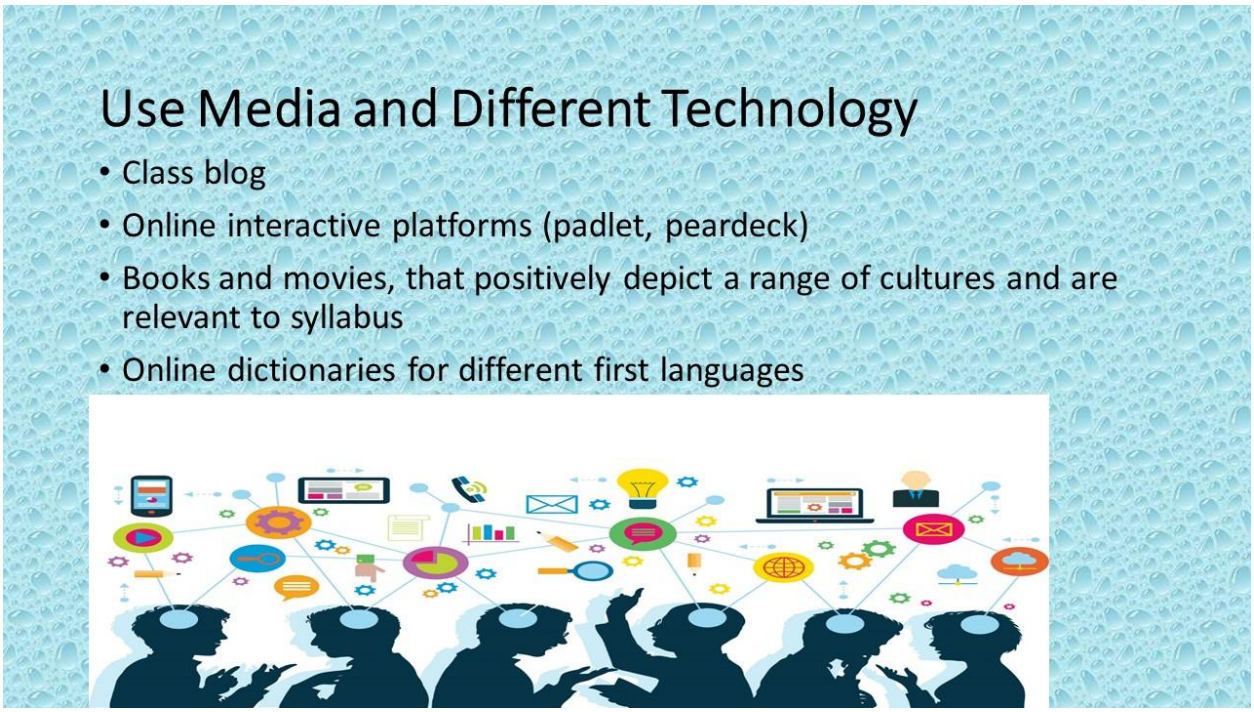
Slide #13

Motivate Students

- Invite guest speakers/educators
- Offer rewards for completing specific tasks or achieving certain scores
- Set clear goals and chart progress

Slide #14

Slide #15



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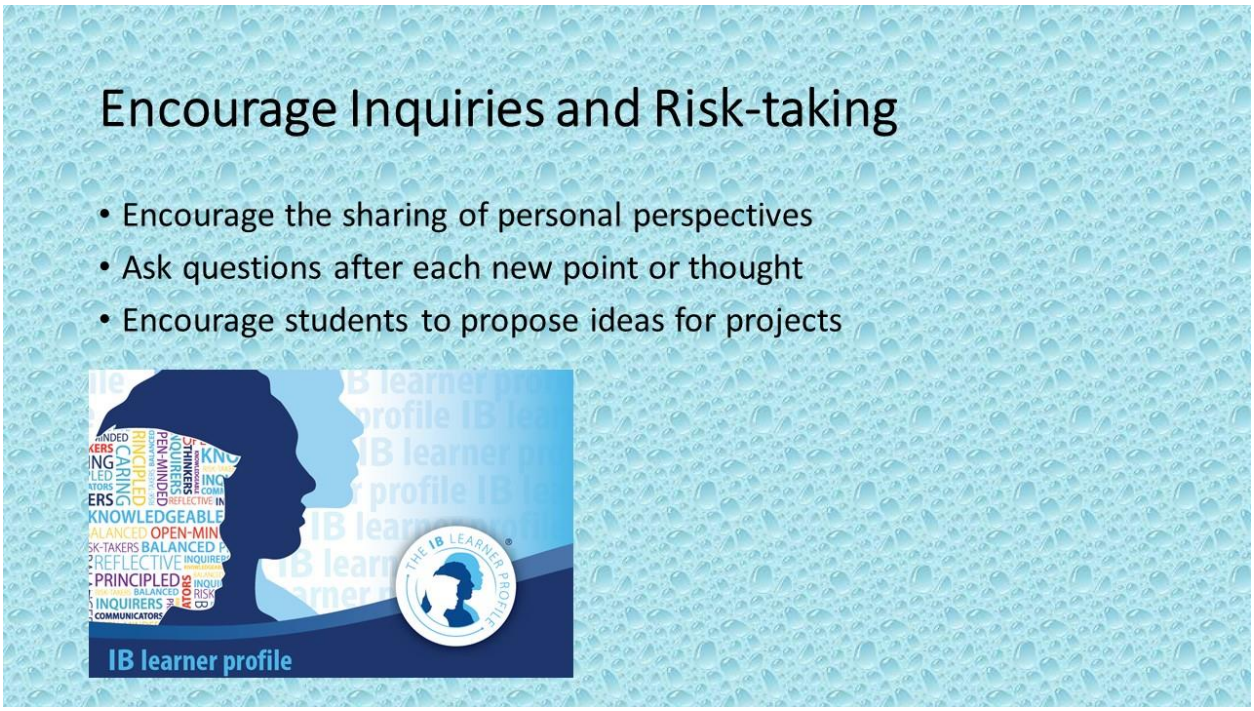
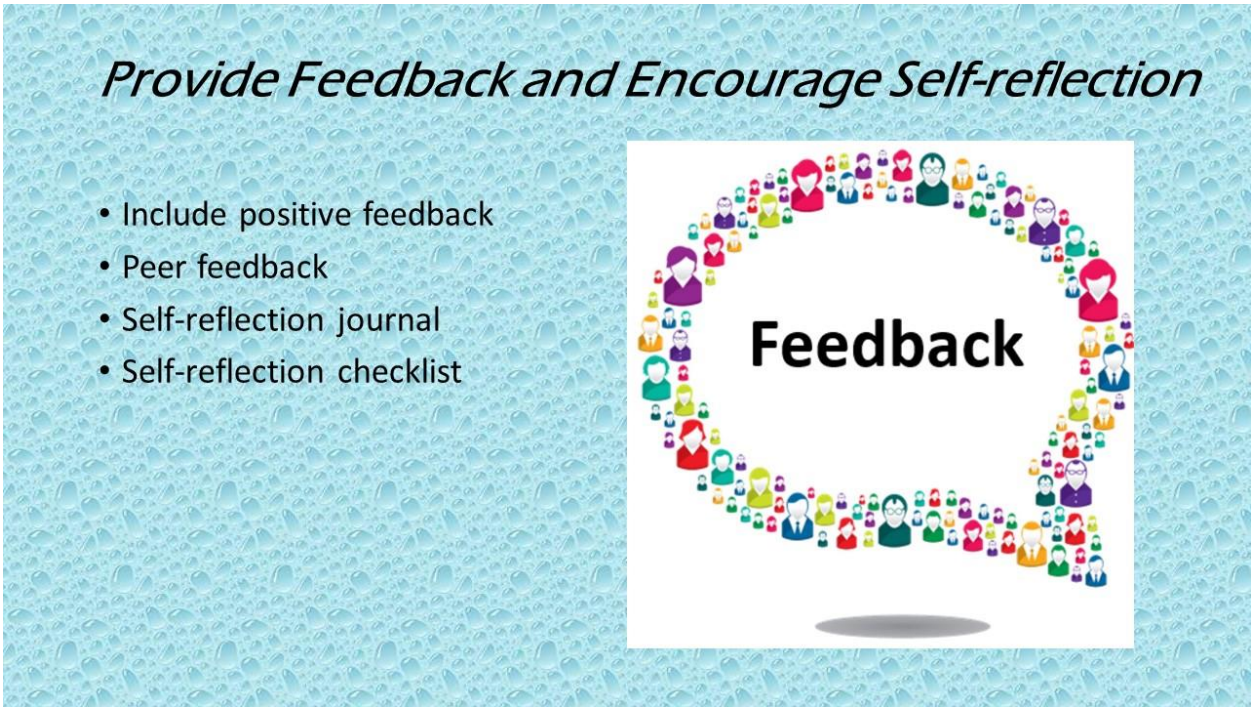


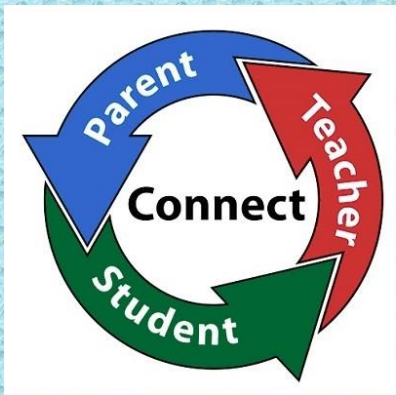
Slide #17



Slide #18

Involve Parents

- Communicate students' progress with parents
- Home visit
- Invite parents to classroom
- Send home students' classwork or project



Slide #19

Culturally Responsive Assessment Strategies

"All instruction is culturally responsive. The question is: To which culture is it currently oriented?"

—Gloria Ladson-Billings

Slide #20

- ✓ Tailor assessment to the background and needs of individual students
- ✓ Consider Equity to the assessment
- ✓ Be selective with assessment instruments
- ✓ Provide a critical space for students to reflect on and share their personal stories and their identities as learners.
- ✓ Consider cultural identities and encourage rigor

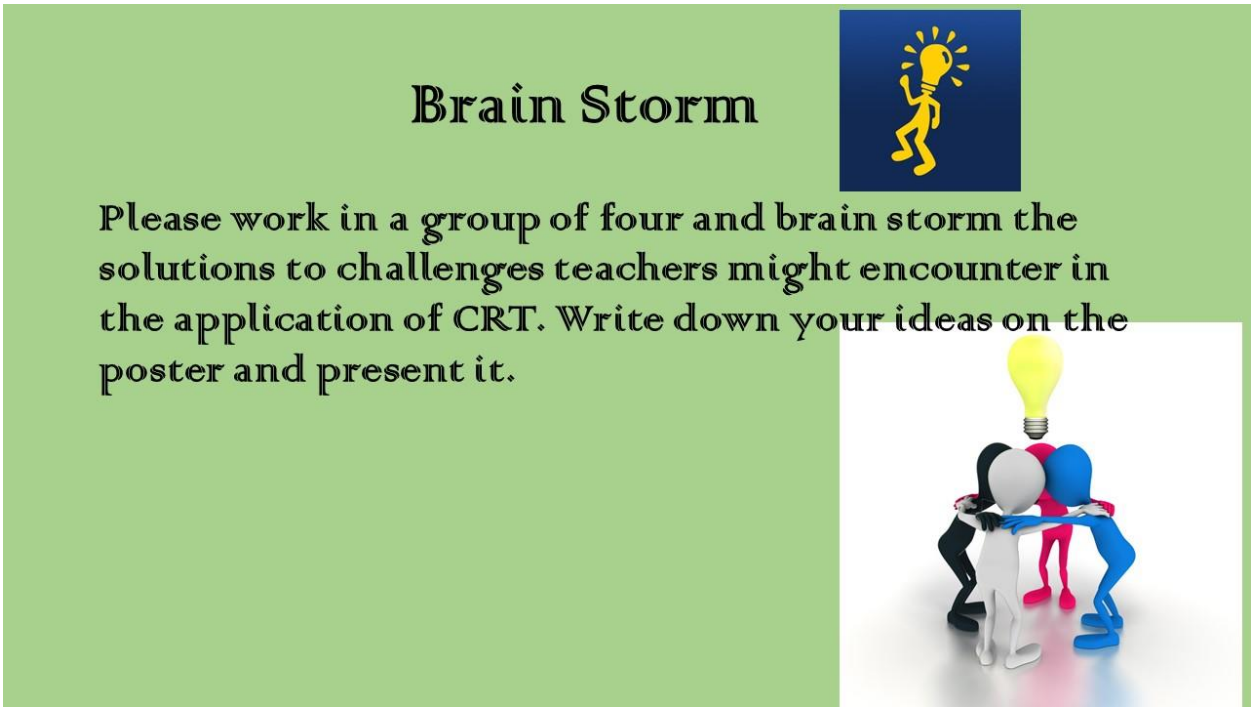
Slide #21

Assessment instruments:

- ❑ Survey (get to know your learners)
- ❑ Portfolio (share stories and build relationships)
- ❑ Self-assessment (gain ownership and responsibility)
- ❑ Story telling with drawings (encourage home language using and creativity)

Slide #22

Slide #23



Slide #24

Self-reflections and Group Discussion

- Please fill out the self-reflection that includes your takeaways from the workshop as well as your goals in the CRT application in your own classroom.
- Through today's sessions, what CRT practice do you think work well in your classroom? Would you like to share? What has been challenging for you in the CRT application?

Slide #25

SELF-REFLECTION FORM

1. What is your biggest takeaway from today's session?	
2. What is your strength in implementing CRT?	
3. What is your biggest challenge in CRT implementation? How will you overcome this challenge in your future practice?	
4. What is your goal in applying CRT in your classroom after today's workshop?	
5. What CRT practice would you like to share with your peers that have worked well in your own classroom?	

Slide #26

Teacher Resources

- Montenegro, E., & Jankowski, N. A. (2017). Equity and assessment: Moving towards culturally responsive assessment. *Occasional Paper, 29*.
- Chapman, C., King, R., & King, R. M. (2005). *Differentiated assessment strategies: One tool doesn't fit all*. Corwin Press.
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- https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED581130
- Culturally responsive teaching fact sheets: chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/viewer.html?pdfurl=https%3A%2F%2Fies.ed.gov%2Fncee%2Fedlabs%2Fregions%2Fmidatlantic%2Fapp%2FDocs%2FInfographics%2FRELMA_Culturally_responsive_pedagogy_fact_sheet.pdf

Slide #27

Thank you for your participation!

Q&A

Contact information:

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Slide #28

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